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## A case study describing and analyzing the second language learning experiences of a sixty-five-year-old learner

Dave M. Adkins  
*Iowa State University*

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**A case study describing and analyzing the second language learning experiences of a  
sixty-five-year-old learner**

by

**Dave M. Adkins**

A thesis submitted to the graduate faculty  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
**MASTER OF ARTS**

Major: Interdisciplinary Graduate Studies

Program of Study Committee:  
Dawn Bratsch-Prince, Major Professor  
Viviana Cortes  
Dawn Stinchcomb

Iowa State University

Ames, Iowa

2004

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Graduate College  
Iowa State University

This is to certify that the master's thesis of  
**Dave M. Adkins**  
has met the thesis requirements of Iowa State University

Signatures have been redacted for privacy

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
ACRONYMS.....	vi
LIST OF TABLES.....	vii
ABSTRACT.....	viii
CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Review of Literature.....	5
Rationale and Hypothesis.....	22
CHAPTER II. METHODOLOGY.....	24
The Case Study.....	24
Data Sources.....	37
Assessment Measures.....	38
CHAPTER III. DATA ANALYSIS.....	40
Introduction.....	40
Language Diaries.....	40
Portuguese.....	40
Spanish.....	53
Direct Measures.....	78
OPI.....	78
L2 Task.....	80

Indirect Measures.....	95
Valentin Assessment.....	95
Benitez Assessment.....	95
Self-Assessment.....	97
Conclusion.....	98
CHAPTER IV. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS.....	99
Non-Language Factors in Second Language Learning.....	99
Limitations of the Study.....	105
Motivation in Second Language Learning.....	106
Conclusions.....	110
Personal Reflection.....	111
REFERENCES.....	122
APPENDICES .....	129
Appendix A: ACTFL-OPI .....	130
Appendix B: Personal Essay.....	132
Appendix C: Interlanguage Notes .....	140

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## ACRONYMS

The following acronyms appear in the study:

AA (Alcoholics Anonymous)

ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages)

CIA (Central Intelligence Agency)

CPH (Critical Period Hypothesis)

EFL (English as a Foreign Language)

ESL (English as a Second Language)

IL (Interlanguage)

ISU (Iowa State University)

L1 (first language, native language)

L2 (second language)

MBA (Master's Degree of Business Administration)

NS (native speaker),

NNS (non-native speaker)

OPI (Oral Proficiency Interview)

OSS (Office of Strategic Services)

SLA (second language acquisition)

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Portuguese and Spanish Word Comparison.....	34
Table 2: Similarities in Written Portuguese and Spanish.....	58
Table 3: Fluency Rating in L2 Task.....	85
Table 4: Accuracy Rating in L2 Task.....	86
Table 5: Complexity of Expression in L2 Task.....	86
Table 6: The Universal Mean in L2 Task.....	87



**ABSTRACT**

The purpose of the investigation was to describe and analyze through a personal case study the second language learning process for one subject, David, who became fluent in Portuguese at the age of fifty-eight and began his study of the Spanish language at the age of fifty-nine. A unique feature of the study was that the subject, David, was also the researcher. This adult learner, who participated in a self-styled program of learning called *La escuela doméstica* (the home school), kept a detailed diary of the learning events and his progress in the study of Portuguese and Spanish for a period of eight years from 1996 through 2003. Evaluation of the subject's language progress was achieved through use of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language-Oral Proficiency Interview and through evaluations written by native speaker tutors. Research questions were as follows: 1) Is the age of the subject a deterrent in the study of Portuguese and Spanish? 2) Does prior knowledge of other foreign languages impact the learning of Spanish? 3) Does formal course work influence the learning progress? 4) Is motivation the primary factor in the learning process? 5) Does culture play a part in the language learning process? 6) Does study with native speaker tutors accelerate the learning process? Results pointed to motivation as the pivotal factor in the subject's eventual fluency in both Portuguese and Spanish.

## CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

## Introduction

The purpose of this investigation is to describe and analyze through a personal case study the second language learning process for one subject, David, who became fluent in Portuguese at age fifty-eight, started to study Spanish at the age of fifty-nine and progressed to an advanced level in speaking and writing that language by the age of sixty-five.. He had previously taken two years of Latin in high school, two years of French in college and had lived in Mozambique for three years where he had studied Portuguese and then twenty-two years later at the age of fifty-seven had become an advanced speaker of Portuguese through two years of tutoring with a Brazilian. The subject, who keeps a detailed diary of the learning events, designs his own plan of language study which is named "*La escuela doméstica*". The present study features the self-reporting by David, the subject, with direct reference to his thoughts and perceptions through his personal language diaries and then description and analysis of the data by David in the role of researcher.

Is there a research technique in the field of linguistics which allows the subject of an investigation to also assume the role of researcher and can one in this dual role present a reasonably objective discussion of events in the second language learning process? A perusal of the Review of Literature in Chapter II of the present study reveals answers in the affirmative to both of these questions. Self-reporting is not all that unusual in language studies and that while a case study is usually third party reporting on one or more subjects, the personal case study is self-reporting and further, daily studies, employed as methodology

in qualitative research in projects of this nature, provide the unique feature of the direct first-hand recording of affective factors, personal insight and personal observations directly drawn from the subject involved in the learning process, an embedded reporter of sorts. Thus, the present study, a personal case study, features self-reporting by David, the subject, with direct description and analysis of the data by David, but now in the role of the third person and researcher. He describes and analyzes the Second Language Acquisition process in both Portuguese and Spanish through reference to his diaries as well as native speaker comment and feedback on progress in speaking, reading and writing the target language. In the study of Spanish, objective evaluation was available through the administration of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language-Oral Proficiency Interview and also through a version of this test.

Both the study of Portuguese and Spanish are prominent in this study. David, had formed a foundation in Portuguese vocabulary and grammar while living in Mozambique, a Portuguese colony at the time, from 1971-1974. In 1996, he began again to study the language, this time in Iowa, with a native language tutor, a Brazilian. David progressed to fluency with the help of the Brazilian and then used his understanding of Portuguese to launch his study of Spanish in 1997 with a series of native speakers of that language. He made the commitment to Spanish because of the availability of a large number of hispanics living in the Des Moines area, David's home, and thus he saw opportunities to use the language in a practical sense on a daily basis. He studied Portuguese with Rejane, the Brazilian tutor, in 1996 and 1997, and then simultaneously worked in Portuguese and Spanish in 1997. After 1997 and to the termination of the period examined in this study, December of 2003, the principal emphasis of *La escuela doméstica* was Spanish, however, the interest

in Portuguese and the study of that language has also continued, but with less emphasis and without tutorial assistance.

Is it possible for one in his late fifties and into his sixties to learn and progress in a second and third non-native language? Much of the respected research in the field of Second Language Acquisition say no, a rather emphatic no. Can non-language influences, such as motivation, personality, learning strategy, and age, impact the learning process? Specifically, can this mature adult, well past his prime of life in the value system of most Western societies, actually improve his second language skills to the point of fluency or even near-native speaking and writing skills in the target language? This discussion leads to a consideration of the following research questions throughout this investigation: 1) Is the age of the subject a deterrent in the study of Portuguese and Spanish? 2) Does prior knowledge of other foreign languages impact the learning of Spanish? 3) Does formal course work influence the learning progress? 4) Is motivation the primary factor in the learning process? 5) Does culture play a part in the language learning process? 6) Does study with native-speaker tutors accelerate the learning process?

The need for local students to learn a second language has become a priority, at least a priority for discussion among educators, in primary and secondary schools in Iowa. With the influx of new citizens and residents from other cultures, for example, some communities, such as the (Iowa) towns of Perry, Marshalltown and West Liberty, report that 40-50% of their high school students are native speakers of Spanish. *The Des Moines Register* reports that in 2003 there were over 13,961 elementary and secondary students in the state of Iowa learning English as a second language, increased from only 4,575 in 1993-94. Local industries have attracted immigrants to fill voids in the local labor market, thus resulting in a

unique blending of cultures replete with the language issue. As school districts attempt to address the complexities of bilingual students in previously traditional English speaking student bodies, it becomes apparent to teachers and learners in the field of Second Language Acquisition that some students progress more rapidly and more expediently than others in learning a second language, commonly called L2 by language teachers. That is, it is clear that there are individual differences in language ability among the learners. Those individual differences according to Gass and Selinker include age, aptitude, motivation, attitude, socio-psychological influences and the impact of the phenomenon of fossilization, referring to “being stuck” short of desired goals in the L2 usually associated with the age of the learner. (Gass and Selinker, 2001).

Not to be left behind in the wake of the new bilingual trends in many Iowa towns and cities, adult learners are showing interest in the study of a second language and may be taking second language training at their places of work, especially in Spanish because of the growing number of Hispanics in the state and in the U.S. in general, through adult education courses or even through their own programs of self-study. For example, Broadlawns Hospital in Des Moines offers Spanish classes to staff in an effort to prepare for the large number of Hispanics who are treated through the hospital’s International Clinic. David, the subject in this study, spent four months on an Iowa State University internship working as a translator between doctors and patients in this clinic at Broadlawns. The English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms of Iowa’s community colleges are filled with adults from around the world striving to learn English. An ESL teacher in Des Moines Area Community College program in Des Moines reported in 2001 a class roster of 35 adults from 18 different countries.

### Review of Literature

Children are at the forefront of achievement in the modern era of the second language acquisition field. Research supports theories that children are more successful second language learners than adults. Why? The explanations offered by researchers have psychosocial and physiological implications. Gass and Selinker (2002) report that Chomsky's (1959, 104) challenge of Skinner's work on behaviorism, which had based learning theory on a stimulus-response paradigm, set in motion research with an emphasis on age as a critical factor in the Second Language Acquisition process and made the distinction between learning L2 and acquiring L2. This distinction is key to the discussion at hand which focuses on the age of the subject as an important individual difference in the L2 process, it is, therefore, necessary to clearly distinguish between *language acquisition* and *language learning*.

Krashen (1982, 198) calls acquisition a "subconscious process" and states that acquirers of a language are probably not aware of the fact that that process is taking place. Krashen (1982) further states that the results of the acquisition are also subconscious and that young people are normally not aware of the rules of languages that they have acquired. However, learning itself is a conscious process and the learner is aware of the rules of grammar which he sets out to master and use. Applying Krashen's definitions, an older person would learn a second language and gain a knowledge of the rules of the language while a child would naturally acquire L2 with little or no knowledge of rules.

Some research seems to emphasize the futility of such a rigorous intellectual challenge for adults as is the learning of a second language. This research points to barriers and obstacles which the older learners, according to this research, will never overcome

because of their age and thus never achieve fluency in a second language. A logical starting point for the discussion of age and L2 study is the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH), developed by Penfield and Roberts (1959, 235-236) and Lenneberg (1967, 179), which pointed to the problems of acquiring a first language, L1, after the age span of nine to twelve. The cases of feral children who failed to acquire L1 after the onset of puberty were examined and empirical evidence supported the findings leading to the CPH. One such study of feral children involved the discovery of a thirteen-year-old “wild child” in 1970 in California. Lightbown and Spada (1993, 11-13) write of the saga of “Genie”, as she was called by psychologists, who had been locked in a small room for years and had not conversed with her parents since infancy. Linguists worked with her for several years and she made some progress in her speaking ability, but she never really ever recovered psychologically, physically or linguistically from the trauma of her bizarre and tragic childhood seclusion. The inconsistent and slow rate of development in the speech of Genie made her case one in support of the CPH.

#### The Biological Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH)

Wilder Penfield, a neurosurgeon who did considerable testing with the hemispheres of the brain in preparation for surgeries, did an historic study (Penfield and Roberts, 1959, 235-36), one that appears in most discussions of the influences of individual differences, i.e., age, in second language learning and acquisition. Penfield described the brain of a child in the nine to twelve age group and before this period as “plastic” in comparison to that of an adult. Thus was born the brain plasticity hypothesis vs. the frozen brain hypothesis. He saw a child in this age category as “a specialist in learning to speak. At that age he can learn two or three languages as easily as one.” Yet after the age of nine, “for purposes of learning

language, the human brain becomes progressively stiff and rigid.” (Penfield & Roberts, 1959, 235-36). Harley (1986, 4) points to Penfield who comments further on the anatomy and physiology of the human brain relative to language abilities.

Before the child begins to speak and to perceive the uncommitted cortex is a blank slate on which nothing has been written. In the ensuing years much is written, and the writing is never erased. After the age of ten or twelve, the general functional connections have been established and fixed in the speech cortex. After that the speech center cannot be transferred to the cortex of the other side, which is then fully occupied for the business of perception. (Penfield, 1964, 80)

Lenneberg (1967, 179-80) is supportive of Penfield’s emphasis on a physiologically based critical period for language acquisition, only he identifies this period as between the ages of two and thirteen. Although his principal concern is with primary language acquisition, Lenneberg (1967, 176) also includes observations and comments on L2 acquisition while conceding that the adult is, in some cases, capable of learning to use a second language, yet maintains even in these situations the relevancy of the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH). That is, Lenneberg emphasizes that the ability to acquire a language automatically from mere exposure is lost after puberty and that foreign languages (after puberty) have to be taught (as opposed to acquired) through “a conscious and labored effort.” (Lenneberg, 1967).

Harley (1986, 9) states that Krashen (1975, 220) agrees with Lenneberg regarding the biological critical period hypothesis and also concedes, as did Lenneberg, that it is not impossible for adults to learn to communicate in a second language, but because of the age factor the process will not be as successful or will it be as natural (as that of the younger subjects). Findings from other studies which compare younger and older students give the



edge to youth in regard to language learning abilities, i.e., in phonology, semantics and syntax (Johnson and Newport, 1989, 60-99).

Even in the earlier stages of discussions of the critical period hypothesis, some researchers, according to Harley (1986, 6-7), argued counter to the ideas of Penfield and Lenneberg. Harley mentions that Scovel (1969, 245-53) and Seliger (1978, 11) limited the impact of puberty on Second Language Acquisition and saw it simply as the end of the critical period for the acquisition of a native accent. Furthermore, according to Harley (1986), Scovel (1981, 37) hypothesized that an adult, even in later life, could become fluent in the syntax and vocabulary of a second language. Lightbown and Spada (1993, 43-45) write that, according to Patkowski (1980), age of acquisition is an important factor in the possibility of the learner developing near-native fluency of a second language. Patkowski (1980) found that “native-like mastery” of a second language was very difficult for mature learners to attain.

#### Cognitively Based Critical Period Hypothesis

While disagreement exists in the discussion of the biologically based critical learning period for language acquisition, Harley (1986, 8-9) writes that Krashen (1975, 220) has called on Inhelder and Piaget and their “cognitive stage of formal operations” to offer an alternative explanation for the critical period subject. Shaffer (1987, 83-99) writes that Piaget identified four stages of cognitive development with formal operations occurring (in some children, not all children) at the age of eleven to twelve and beyond. According to Shaffer, flexibility is the distinguishing and most important characteristic of formal-operational thinking, which means that the thinking process is no longer dependent on the “observable or imaginable” and that formal operators can understand abstractions which do

not necessarily have a basis in reality. Shaffer (1987, 94-95) comments further on formal operations as follows:

One way to determine whether a preadolescent has crossed over into the stage of formal operations is to present a thought problem that violates her views about the real world. The concrete learner, whose thinking is tied to objective reality, will often balk at hypothetical propositions. In fact, she may even reply that it is impossible to think about objects that don't exist or events that could never happen. In contrast, formal operators enjoy thinking about hypotheticals and are likely to generate some very unusual and creative responses. (1987, 94-95)

Shaffer (1987) refers to the work of Inhelder and Piaget to emphasize that the cognitive stage of formal operations related to Second Language Acquisition starts in puberty and may influence the end of the critical period for L2 acquisition. It is thus supposed that the idea that a subject at the “stage of formal operations” may be hampered in his ability to naturally learn a language is an explanation which, at first reading, appears to be slightly convoluted, as Krashen (1975, 220) considers the desire of the adult to attain “a conscious understanding” of the language as an obstacle to his goals. Krashen is referring here to the natural acquisition of L2 by children who apparently make no effort to consciously understand what they are acquiring as it seems to come naturally. It seems that the formal operator approaches problem solving in an increasingly systematic and abstract manner, similar to the hypothetical-deductive reasoning employed in science research, and thus affects the natural language acquisition possibility. Thus, even though a formal operator, who has passed from the concrete to formal operations stage in a gradual manner between the age of eleven and thirteen, has reached an advanced stage in Piaget's view of the learning process, this new found cognitive ability does not necessarily enhance his Second Language Acquisition capability. In fact, it may be an obstacle.

According to Shaffer (1987, 95), who again refers to the work of Piaget, the formal operator has a tendency to become philosophical and dedicates his time to “thinking about thinking.” Piaget believes that these new cognitive skills are bound to impact emotionally the adolescent formal operator who now has the ability to weigh complex issues, such as morality, mortality and justice. On the other hand, it would seem that a child in pre-adolescence, who we would assume carries a “child-like” inhibition, for example, living in a new country with a new language, probably seeks only to make friends through communicating in the language of those children accessible to him; he, therefore, does not trouble himself with analyzing too profoundly to understand the language, but simply needs to speak it to be accepted. Thus, it seems that the formal operator, because of his intellectual and emotional preoccupation with the application of his newly acquired cognitive skills which allow him to probe philosophical and abstract issues, is no longer “free” (available) to take advantage of the natural flow of second language skills.

Harley (1986, 12) writes that Felix (1981, 41) presents another version of the formal operations hypothesis and further explains the obstacles which the formal operator faces in Second Language Acquisition. Felix, who hypothesizes that there are highly developed “language-specific cognitive structures” (LSC) which become active during native language acquisition (L1) and in L2 acquisition of children, agrees with Piaget regarding the obstacles to the formal operator in Second Language Acquisition. While Piaget emphasizes the development of new cognitive skills which distract the formal operator as a language learner, Felix explains this process as an intervention by other (separate) “problem solving cognitive structures” (PSC). This intervention by PSC could be visualized as a struggle or competition between LSC and PSC structures which begins to occur during the cognitive stage of formal

operations from the ages of ten to twelve. This competitive process continues into adulthood and Felix sees the LSC-PSC issue as an explanation of why adults seem to be inferior to children in the acquisition of “a native-like” command of a second language.

Commenting further, according to Huitt and Hummel (2003, internet), Piaget identified as progressive the four stages in cognitive development – 1. sensorimotor (infancy); 2. pre-operational (toddler, early childhood); 3. concrete operational stage (elementary and early adolescence); and 4. formal operational stage (adolescence and adulthood). In the formal operations stage, the child develops the ability to apply “logical thinking” to concrete objects, that is, those that are real or easily imagined. Furthermore, Huitt and Hummel assert that only about 35% of high school graduates in industrialized countries achieve formal operations.

Even though the current discussion focuses on cognition rather than biology, it is difficult to separate the two in the language acquisition puzzle. According to Harley (1986, 8-9), Krashen (1975, 220) agrees with Piaget and Felix that obstacles to Second Language Acquisition do, in fact, exist during the formal operations stage of cognitive development with increasing age or maturation seeming to be a main issue. Krashen sees the (emotional) volatility of adolescence as a barrier to L2 and the self-conscious nature of children in this stage as a “filter” to the second language acquisition process. This would call to mind the example of the pre-adolescent or early adolescent language student in the formal operations stage contemplating the meaning of life, death and the universe while other members of the class are busy and possibly some content in conjugating the Spanish verb, *hablar*. Further, according to Felix, the struggle between LSC and PSC in the formal operator would add to the distraction.

Also, there is a large collection of literature which focuses on the impact of emotions on the behavior, personality development and academic achievement of children. For example, Axline's Dibbs in Search of Self (1964) is a case study which examines the struggles of Dibbs, a child in therapy attempting to resolve a severe psychological problem around identity. Dibbs isolates himself and lives in his own world, not unlike the philosophical distance established by the formal operator in his version of isolation through the contemplation of weighty ideas and complex issues. Although Dibbs has disruptive psychological problems and the formal operator experiences (normal) cognitive changes which impact him emotionally and intellectually, it seems that Dibbs and the formal operator face a similar dilemma in the form of obstacles which block access to natural cognitive spontaneity. The adolescent in formal operations has probably passed the time of child-like inhibition and is into the highly sensitive, self-conscious mode and less likely to take the risks necessary to build the foundations for Second Language Acquisition. This line of reasoning could lead to a case in favor of the adult in the L2 process, who we assume would progress from the self-conscious adolescent to a more mature, emotionally stable adult, possibly more confident and thus ready to take the risks necessary to learn L2.

### Motivation

Assuming there is an ideal learner – at the right age (Critical Period Hypothesis), the right place (a new country with a new language) and of reasonable aptitude, but with questionable attitude and little motivation to drive the process and capitalize on the opportunity, the L2 learning success rate would probably not be strong in this formula. Looking at a different scenario – the wrong age (fifty years plus), the wrong place (English speaker in English speaking country) with unknown aptitude, but with a positive attitude

toward language learning and exceptional motivation *to master* L2, the result could be L2 fluency, even near native fluency. Not to say that “exceptional motivation” guarantees that the subject will achieve all of his goals in learning a new language. In fact, Skehan (1989) states “such evidence as is available from quantification-based studies generally demonstrates that aptitude is at least as important, and usually more important, than any other variable investigated. . .”

Adding comment to the topic of aptitude, Carroll (1973, 5), according to Krashen (1983, 19-21), defines foreign language aptitude as “the rate at which persons at the secondary school, university and adult level learn to criterion.” Carroll (Krashen, 1983) writes that the criterion in this case refers to standardized tests such as the Modern Language Aptitude Tests (MLAT) and the Language Aptitude Battery (LAB) which contain the components of measuring student abilities in phonetic coding, grammatical awareness and inductive ability (Krashen, 1981). Krashen (1983, 19) reports that aptitude and attitude seem to be related to achievement in second language learning, but do not appear to be related to each other.

Thus, a student could score high in aptitude testing, yet low in attitude or vice versa or high in both or low in both. Krashen (1983, 37) refers to factors of attitude related to SLA as those which “encourage intake”, availing oneself of informal language learning opportunities and being “open” to input. In other words, an attitude conducive to learning a second language would mean a student with an open mind to the channels available for learning. Thus, Krashen (1983) sees the “good language learner” as willing to “go out and get” intake and possessing the aptitude to utilize it, while the “bad language learner” would

have a general low aptitude reflected in little interest in the target language, lack of enthusiasm for grammar and experience high anxiety.

Yet, even with the discussion of aptitude and attitude in place, remove high levels of motivation from the learning process and it would seem much less likely that learning (especially in adult learners) would occur. It could even be argued that motivation is one of the most important of the individual differences, if not the single most important, among individual differences of language learners and that exceptional motivation is probably sufficient to overcome other obstacles in the Second Language Acquisition formula.

MacIntyre (2002, 46), who reports that Reeve (1992, 3) sees motivation as giving energy and direction to behavior, writes that motivation focuses on three issues 1) why behavior is directed toward a specific goal; 2) what determines the intensity or effort invested in pursuing a goal; and 3) why different people in the same situation differ in strength and direction of their motivation.

MacIntyre (in Robinson, 2002, 45) writes that Gardner, whose research has influenced the Second Language Acquisition field for over four decades, and MacIntyre (1992, 211-220) cite affective variables in their socio-educational model. These include attitudes, motivation, language anxiety, and self-confidence, while the cognitive factors in this model are identified as intelligence, language aptitude and language learning strategies. Also, they see the four requirements in defining the critical elements of motivation as 1) a goal; 2) a desire to achieve that goal; 3) a positive attitude; and 4) effort. In a key observation and highly relevant to the current study, Gardner and MacIntyre (1992, 212), reported by MacIntyre in Robinson (2002, 46-47), state that *“there are probably as many factors that might account for individual differences in achievement in a second language as*

*there are individuals.*” This powerful statement provides insight to Gardner’s integrative approach to understanding Second Language Acquisition which includes three variables in the learning situation – attitudes, integrativeness and motivation. That is, the emphasis on integrativeness takes into account the combination of factors which contribute to progress in SLA and that, as reported by MacIntyre (2002, 48):

It should be stressed that Gardner (1996) proposed that the effects of integrative motivation on language learning are largely the result of the motivational component. This component is defined by Gardner as a combination of motivational intensity, desire to learn the language and attitudes toward learning the language. Gardner emphasizes that it is the active learner, the student who engages with the language, who can be considered motivated. The student who endorses the integrative attitudes, or more simply an integrative orientation or goal, but who does not show effort and engagement with the language, is simply not a motivated learner. .(2002, 48) .

MacIntyre (2002, 49) further states that the socio-educational model is of a dynamic nature because it describes language learning yielding either linguistic or non-linguistic outcomes. Linguistic outcomes are the skill, knowledge and competence in use of the language itself, while the non-linguistic category includes the individual difference variables of attitude and motivation, which change during the learning process.

Of particular importance in the discussion of motivation as an individual difference in SLA is the distinction drawn by Gardner in defining the active learner as possessing a unique intensity with a strong desire to achieve his goal of dominance in the L2, while the less motivated, or non-motivated, learner simply lacks the driving force, i.e. the motivation, to engage with the language. A high level of motivation seems to be one of the common factors shared by Julie, the subject of the Ioup study (1994, 73) and David, the subject of the current study. Both adult learners are shown to seek input and engage with the language.



### A Challenge of CPH: A One Subject, Adult Learner Case Study

The Ioup, Boustagui, El Tigi and Moselle investigation (1994, 73) determined to challenge the CPH and employed a one subject case study, similar in this regard to the present investigation in examining the learning experiences of Julie, who at the age of twenty-one had moved with her husband from Britain to Cairo. Less than two weeks after her arrival there, her husband was called to military service and Julie responded by starting the process of learning Arabic. When her husband returned forty-five days later, they spoke English at home but Julie continued with her pursuit of Arabic outside of the home. A year after arriving in Cairo, she developed some reliable native speaker contacts through a teaching job and received productive feedback from them on a daily basis. Within three years, she was conversing in Arabic, which was also spoken at this point in her home, and at the time of the Ioup study, Julie had lived in Egypt for twenty-six years and had two bilingual children.

Is Julie, in fact, an exception to the CPH? In order to probe this question, the investigators, Ioup, Boustagui, El Tigi and Moselle, stated that it is necessary to assess Julie in three areas including the quality of her speech production, her ability to recognize accents and her knowledge of explicit feedback. Her Arabic output is then compared to native speakers and to a competent L2 speaker, Laura, who had studied spoken and written Arabic dialects in a formal setting. Laura, an American married to an Egyptian and living in Cairo, had several years of formal instruction which included graduate study in the Egyptian dialect at the American University in Cairo.

At the time of the study, Julie was forty-seven years old and Laura forty. In assessing spontaneous speech in the task of discussing their favorite recipe, thirteen judges, all teachers

of Arabic as a foreign language, rated the performance of Julie, Laura and five other female speakers, three of whom were educated native speakers and two were proficient nonnative speakers and longtime residents of the city of Cairo. Results reported by Ioup and colleagues showed that the judges identified the three native speakers and the two nonnative speakers correctly and eight of the thirteen judges rated Julie and Laura as native speakers. The judges not giving them the native speaker rating cited some technicalities in pronunciation as the obstacle.

Continuing the complex assessment process and in this instance a test of accent identification, Julie and Laura listened to tapes with Libyan, Syrian, Palestinian, Kuwaiti, Sudanese and two regional dialects of Egyptian and were faced with the task of identifying the Egyptian among the other languages. In an impressive result, both Julie and Laura executed the task without error. In Part III of the testing process, grammatical intuitions were probed through administering to Julie and Laura three tests designed to measure subtleties of Egyptian Arabic (EA). Both subjects showed similar competence in EA and, in general, Laura, the instructed learner, reached a higher level of proficiency than did Julie, the naturalistic learner. Although the results of this comprehensive testing would seem to indicate some prominent discrepancies with findings in the formulation of the CPH, the Ioup group recommended further testing to answer the question to determine if Julie or Laura could be considered exceptions to CPH. (Ioup, Boustagui, El Tigi and Moselle, 1994)

### Misconceptions

While the recent history of individual differences with focus on age and motivation has been examined in this discussion through the literature, Marinova-Todd, Marshall and Snow (2000, 9) set out to challenge and analyze what they refer to as “common

misconceptions about L2 learning.” Taking a particularly strong and critical position of the findings of some of the previous studies, those which seem to disparage the chances of the adult learners mastering a second language, Marinova-Todd, Marshall and Snow (2000) do agree that adults are generally less likely than children to become fluent in L2, yet they maintain that “a close examination of studies relating to language acquisition reveals that age differences reflect differences in the situation of learning rather than in the capacity to learn. They do not demonstrate any constraint on the possibility that adults can become proficient, even nativelylike, speakers of L2s” (2000, 9) Referring to the “blunders” of previous researchers, Marinova-Todd and associates identify the source of the so-called blunders as “misinterpretation of the facts relating to speed of acquisition, misattribution of age differences in language abilities to neurobiological factors, and, most notably, a misemphasis on poor adult learners and an underemphasis on adults who master L2s to nativelylike levels” (2000, 9).

Concerned over the (mis)interpretation of the critical period for language acquisition (CPH) and research related to this topic, Marinova-Todd, Marshall and Snow (2000, 9) make the point that even though there is general agreement among psycholinguists regarding a critical period for the acquisition of L1, there is still controversy when the critical period idea should be applied to L2 learning. Not to be misunderstood on their position regarding some of the past research, this Harvard trio of investigators emphasize that they do accept the “overwhelming evidence” that younger L2 learners achieve on a higher level than do adult learners. However, they ask for more evidence on this topic and they do not accept that the critical period formula applies to second language acquisition. Again, the Marinova-Todd, Marshall and Snow article (2000) points to the “fallacies of misinterpretation, misattribution

and misemphasis” of the previous research and are particularly critical of the set of studies which “imply that no adults are capable of achieving nativelike proficiency, ignoring the existence of proficient adult learners” (2000, 27)

Marinova-Todd, Marshall and Snow. (2000, 26-27) refer to the Ioup, Boustagui, Tigi and Moselle study (1994) as an example of adult learners who had shown nativelike proficiency in Arabic, a very complex language for English speakers. Citing the subjects in Ioup, Julie and Laura, as having had a strong desire to attain an advanced level in L2, Marinova-Todd (2000, 9) attribute the notable linguistic achievement of these two women to their unusual motivation, their environment, and focus on the study of grammar.

#### A Response from Sweden

Reacting to the rather critical position taken by Marinova-Todd, Marshall and Snow (2000, 9) on the research regarding the topic of age and L2 learning, Hyttenstam and Abrahamsson (2001, 165) respond with indignation from Sweden. The tone of the article goes beyond philosophical perspective and takes on an adversarial quality, possibly even an underlying nationalistic theme. Does nationalism actually enter into intellectual discussions among linguists? Hutton (2004) would not be surprised by a nationalistic characterization of the article by Hyttenstam and Abrahamsson and states the following: “The involvement of linguistics in political, national and other social movements has been underplayed or ignored, and the political and cultural impact of linguistics theories underestimated. This neglect has led to a number of myths and misconceptions gaining hold within intellectual history and the history of linguistics” (2004).

Hyttenstam and Abrahamsson argue that Marinova-Todd, Marshall and Snow group’s “arguments against the CPH are not tenable and that their presentation of alleged

facts about the relationship between age and SLA is misconceived and misleading.” (2001, 165). The Swedish team sees their American counterparts at Harvard as applying highly selective facts and references to their arguments. Hylltenstam and Abrahamsson (2001, 165-66) also point out what they consider, in addition to “the misrepresentations and obvious misunderstandings” by the Marinova-Todd, Marshall and Snow team, “errors”, including a comment on the Ioup study (2001).

Further, Hylltenstam and Abrahamsson (2001, 165) say that Ioup, Boustagui, El Tigi and Moselle (1994) focused on only one subject, Julie, not two subjects, Julie and Laura, and also disagree with the explanation by Marinova-Todd (2000) for Julie’s L2 success, which Marinova-Todd, Marshall and Snow (2000, 26-27) explain as follows: “Their (Julie and Laura) success in L2 learning was attributed to their high degree of motivation to learn the language, their exposure to a naturalistic environment, and their conscious attention to grammatical form.” Further explaining their position, Marinova-Todd, Marshall and Snow (2000, 27-28) say that the misinterpretation by researchers in the observation of child and adult language learners reinforces the fallacy that children are fast and efficient learners of second languages. They say that there is a misattribution of conclusions drawn from research regarding brain functioning and language learning, and they state further that researchers do not identify the real reason that adult learners of L2 do not usually achieve high levels of fluency, because adult learners do not engage in L2 study with adequate levels of motivation and commitment.

In calling this explanation an error, Hylltenstam and Abrahamsson (2001, 165-66) use this interpretation: “They (Ioup, Boustagui, El Tigi and Moselle, 1994, 92) do not particularly draw on motivation and natural exposure in their account but rather draw on the

fact that 'Julie, from the very beginning, consciously manipulated the grammatical structure of the language and paid attention to form'. Furthermore, the Swedish believes that their American counterparts in linguistic research failed to include what they (the Swedes) consider to be Ioup, Boustagui, El Tigi and Moselle's most important point, Julie's natural talent in language learning: Thus, Hyldenstam and Abrahamsson defend the research on CPH and the non-language factor of age as a deterrent in language learning, the research (CPH) which Marinova-Todd, Marshall and Snow feel over-emphasized the age factor. In turn, the Swedish team is critical of the Harvard team's not mentioning the factor of language learning talent. The statement by Ioup, El Tigi and Moselle, in the view of Hyldenstam and Abrahamsson, detracts from Marinova-Todd, Marshall and Snow's criticism of research as discriminating against adult learners in the second language learning process. It emphasizes talent, not age, as the critical issue. This statement follows: "But even with attention to form, most learners do not achieve nativelike proficiency. We believe an additional factor is responsible for Julie's success: talent in learning languages" (Ioup, Boustagui, El Tigi and Moselle, 1994).

Thus, Hyldenstam and Abrahamsson (2001) seek to defend the existing research supporting CPH through a rebuttal of the position taken in the article by Marinova-Todd, Marshall and Snow (2000), who criticize CPH research and see adult language learners as not being treated fairly by researchers regarding their second language learning achievements. Marinova-Todd, Marshall and Snow point to several studies, including one written by Ioup, Boustagui, El Tigi and Moselle (1994) which shows that Julie, the adult subject, achieved phenomenal success in learning Arabic in her forties. Hyldenstam and

Abrahamsson counter and say that language learning talent, not age, “was the distinguishing criteria in Julie’s success.

### Rationale and Hypothesis

Where does this leave the debate regarding the relationship between non-language factors, specifically age and motivation, relative to Second Language Acquisition? It seems clear to researchers that some people are more effective learners than others. Proponents of the CPH would lead one to believe that an adult learner has little chance to progress in learning a second language; yet, those who place motivation into the equation, would say that the age issue can be neutralized by the desire to learn. Given nature of the age vs. motivation discussion, the current personal case study of the sixty-five-year-old subject, David, is relevant to these current issues in SLA as cited in the Review of Literature. The current study is also timely in the discussion which started with Penfeld and Roberts (1959) and Lenneberg (1967) and their CPH research and which continued through 2002 with the disagreement between the teams of Hyltenstam and Abrahamsson (2001) and of Marinova-Todd, Marshall and Snow (2000).

This thesis proposes to examine through a personal case study the non-language factors of age, motivation, personality and learning strategy, which includes native language tutoring and formal university study. Also, prior learning experiences and culture will be considered in an effort to determine which of these non-language factors exercise the most influence over adult second language learning achievement. In order to make this determination, this thesis will consider David’s perceptions of the language learning process, supplemented by introspection and self-observation, noted in his personal language diaries,

which first record his learning experiences in the study of Portuguese and next in the study of Spanish. It is the belief of the investigator that the non-language factor of motivation will emerge as a pivotal factor in the success of the learner. The investigator made the following assumptions regarding non-language influences and second language learner progress of the adult learner, David, in his personal case study: the age of the subject will not be a deterrent in the language learning process; knowledge of other foreign languages will impact the SLA process of the subject; formal course work will enhance the language learning process; motivation will play a pivotal role in the level of success in the learning process; culture will play a primary role in the level of success in the L2 learning process; and, study with native-speaker tutors will accelerate the learning process.



## CHAPTER II

### METHODOLOGY

#### The Case Study

##### The Personal Case Study (Diary-Journal) Research Approach

The personal case study with a longitudinal design, which is considered appropriate research methodology in language studies employing self-reporting, was selected as the approach to describe and analyze the learning experiences of the subject in this project. Gass and Selinker (2002, 31) state that longitudinal studies are normally case studies, but not always, with data collection from a single subject, or a small number of subjects, taken over an extended period of time with a variation in the frequency of data collection. Furthermore, Gass and Selinker (2002) write that data in longitudinal case studies come from “spontaneous speech” which can be generated from a conversation organized by the researcher and analysis of the data is often “in the form of descriptive qualitative comments or narrative expositions” (31). In contrast, empirical research of the traditional variety is of a quantitative nature and usually compares and contrasts behavior or opinion of two matching groups, a control group and an experimental group, with conclusions then drawn and applied to the general population of the group under study. However, the longitudinal case study falls into the category of qualitative methodology, is analytical and holistic and employs the techniques of observation, questionnaire with interview and verbal report. Nunan (Bailey, Curtis, and Nunan, 2001, 75) says that case studies are “a familiar genre in Second Language Acquisition research” and involve “an instance in action” in which the investigator might select a language learner and examine the manner in which he functions in context. Myers

(1987) writes that “a case study is a descriptive record of an individual’s experiences and/or behaviors kept by an outside observer and provides information from which we may draw conclusions about the impact of significant events in a person’s life” (Myers, 1987, 24).

A case study can include examination of one subject, a few or several; while, according to Wallace (1997: 168-70), the personal case study employs the unique feature of the researcher and the subject under study being the same person, who self reports on events relevant to the purpose of the study. Prominent among the various personal cases studies reported in the field of SLA is the work of Schmidt and Frota (1986, 237) in which Schmidt recorded his linguistic experiences in attempting to learn Portuguese in a five-month visit to Brazil. During this period, he kept journal entries of his exchanges of conversation including his self-talk regarding learning strategies and the hypotheses which he formed about the target language. In addition to the journal reporting, Schmidt also participated in recorded conversations in Portuguese with Frota, the co-author of the study, who is a native speaker of Brazilian Portuguese and a linguist. Schmidt, the self-reporter, claims to have learned to speak Arabic well due to formal study and his eight-year residence in Egypt and Lebanon. He also had previous experiences in his school days in the study of French, Japanese and German with no significant level of competence claimed. However, he had no knowledge of Portuguese prior to this trip to Brazil in which his journal was written. His early journal writings include very basic Portuguese, notations of words such as *já* (*already*) appeared as a topic in his Week Two Entries and progressed to simple sentences using the imperfect and preterite tenses. For example, “*Trabalhava, trabalhei lá, huh? . . não, eles não pagaram. . .* (*trabalhava* is in the imperfect tense and *trabalhei* and *pagaram* in the preterite: I used to

work, I worked there, huh? . . . no, they didn't pay". . . The study presents page after page of this type of fastidious and detailed reporting, comment and analysis.

Bailey and Ochsner (1983, 188) refer to the type of work, which Wallace (2001, 170) calls the personal case study, as a diary study. These two writers see the diary approach as a creative research style in which the author shapes the data into a means of expressing his own point of view, "like an art genre; so the proper analytic tool is, in this case, modeled on literary criticism." (Bailey and Ochsner, 1983, 187) Defending the diary approach as a "traditional tool" in the field of social science research, Bailey and Ochsner (1983, 187-88) say that diary studies produce more hypotheses as more studies are considered, which they consider a positive activity. Furthermore, they contend that activities of an Second Language Acquisition diary should include the following: an account of the diarist's personal language history and environment systematically recorded in a confidential and candid manner; a revision of journal entries to clarify meaning in the public version of the diary; a notation of patterns and significant events in the entries; and the identification and interpretation of important factors and patterns in the language learning experience. Bailey and Oschner (1983, 189) comment further as follows:

What is a diary study? A diary study in second language learning, acquisition, or teaching is an account of the second language experience as recorded in a first-person journal. The diarist may be a language teacher or a language learner – but the central characteristic of the diary studies is that they are introspective: the diarist studies his own teaching or learning. Thus he can report on affective factors, language learning strategies, and his own perceptions – facets of the language learning experience which are normally hidden or largely inaccessible to an external observer. The diary studies differ from the second language acquisition case studies primarily because the diarist supplements his observations of events with introspection and self-observation. However, the first person diaries may be also analyzed by other researchers (e.g., Bailey, Scarecella and Hensley, 1979).

Schumann and Schuman (Scarcella and Krashen, 1980, 51) cite their use of language journals as a research tool in self-reporting their findings of an introspective study of their acquisition of Arabic in Tunisia and Persian in Iran. (The use of the word “acquisition” for adult learners would be inconsistent with today’s critical period terminology). Their diaries were written describing a two-month period in Tunisia and another two-month stay in Iran in the seventies. Also included in the diary writing was an experience in a Persian class at UCLA in 1976. The self-reporters maintained detailed journals recording “our feelings and reactions toward the foreign cultures, the target language speakers, and the methods of instructions.” They kept a log of their daily events and did an analysis to identify the most important variables impacting learning, which they labeled *personal variables* and which included nesting patterns, transition anxiety, reactions to pedagogical techniques, motivation, desire and learning strategy. A week-by-week examination of their journals provided information to trace “ups and downs” in their language learning experiences.

Wallace (1997, 168) cites yet another example of the personal case study, the work of Ransdell (1993), who recorded her own experiences in a diary as a student in a college class called Modern Greek and then published the findings. Doughty and Long (2003, 502) reports that Han (1998, 2000), Lardiere (1998a, 1998b, 2000a, 2000b) and Long (1997) employed the case study approach in their three prominent longitudinal studies of interlanguage (IL) stabilization and putative fossilization. Interlanguage is language produced, the output, of a non-native speaker and fossilization refers to the termination of learning (Glass and Slinker, 2001, 455). Another way to define interlanguage with no attention to linguistic political correctness is the errors that a non-native speaker makes in practicing L2, the target language, and fossilization is simply errors that become permanent

in the learner's L2 output. Han (Doughty and Long, 502) focused on two Chinese speakers, F and G, aged thirty-two and thirty-six; Lardiere reports on Patty, 32, who has been his informant for ten years on his current study; and Long has reported for sixteen years on Ayako, a Japanese born in 1926. Wallace (1997, 168) states that "if the case study relates to an individual learner, it will probably be necessary to know various personal details concerning the learner. These might include age, sex, status (e.g. student, manager, etc.), mother tongue, number of years learning the target language, etc. . ."

#### Pros and Cons of Self-Reporting and the Case Study

While emphasizing that the case study with one or a few subjects does not normally allow the researcher to generalize results to an entire population of learners, Wallace (1997, 161) does concede that a subjective judgment by the researcher might place the subject as a typical member of a larger group. Therefore, under these circumstances (of the subjective judgment), some observations could possibly be considered and examined for application to a larger specific population. Schmidt and Frota (1986, 238) report that Baltra, in his own experiences as a Portuguese language learner and self-reporter, reflected on his learning experiences and said that one cannot observe what goes on in another's mind and paradoxically the same limitation probably applies to his own mind. His comment alluded to some inherent issues of the shortcomings in the process of self-reporting which is supported by Bailey and Ochsner (1983, 188-192) who cite diary studies as subjective, idiosyncratic and "filtered through dubious perceptions." Adding to the discussion, Davis (1995, 427) writes that in the past controversy has surrounded the qualitative approaches used in linguistics research with much of the debate around research traditions, definitions of research and qualitative research theory and methods.

While the limitations of self-reporting are well known, the case study and personal case study (diary) are prominent in the literature. Yet another first person account and example of self-reporting is the work of Denby (1996), a New York writer who returned at the age of forty-eight to Columbia University to revisit as an adult student two courses in Western Classics which he had taken thirty-five years before. He rediscovers with new appreciation Homer, Plato, Augustine, Nietzsche, etc., and describes skillfully his teachers, past and present, and focuses on the strengths and weaknesses of the modern students of a “media age society” (Denby, 1996, 15-16). The product of his return to the campus is a blend of self-reporting, autobiography, criticism and commentary on the culture.

In spite of the opinions of those writers who point to the downside of the case study approach, there are also many positives, including the advantage of allowing researchers with unusual interest in a particular topic and/or human subject to give specific focus to that subject and situation. Another positive aspect of the case study and personal case study approach to research is the personalization of the research process with specific focus on one or a few human beings rather than scores or hundreds of “subjects”. Ohta (1995, 51) seems to show agreement on the matter of the impersonal nature of research in the second language acquisition field and expresses interest in bridging the gap between the theory (impersonal) generated in research and its application through the practitioner in the classroom (personal). Ohta (1995, 51) states: “There is a growing interest among teachers and researchers in understanding how language development occurs through situated interaction, not in laboratories, but classrooms, tutoring sessions and other teaching-learning settings.” She adds: “This work has considered learners as neither processors of input, nor producers of output, but as speakers/hearers involved in the development process which are realized in

interaction” (Ohta, 1995, 51) Ellis (1999,16) adds fuel to Ohta’s comments regarding the personalizing research and refers to “the predominant metaphor of SLA – that of the learner as a computer that processes input in accordance with the mechanisms wired into the black box of the mind and that subsequently produces output on demand.”

### Native Speaker, L2 Speaker

Ohta (1995, 51) brings up another point, at times a sensitive point, regarding the Native Speaker teacher vs. Non-Native Speaker teacher issue. She sees value in and favors collaborative interaction between a native speaker interlocutor and a non-native speaker as the focus of assessment, a concept consistent with the methodology of the present study. Cook (1999, 185-86) cites the definition provided by Davies (1996) of the *native language* as the language acquired naturally in childhood, the language acquired first, and the *native speaker* is he who uses that language. Cook states that Davies sees the definition of native speaker as an unalterable, historic and biological fact. In contrast to the native speaker is the L2 learner, not a natural acquirer of language, and L2 user of a second language, not the language first acquired. Cook (1999, 186-88) sees the distinction between “L2 learner” and “L2 user” as one of depth of understanding and skill in speaking the second language. That is, the L2 user is an advanced learner. Relevant to the NS-NNS discussion, David, the subject of this study, preferred to work with native speaker tutors in progressing from L2 learner to L2 user during the six-year program of Spanish study.

### The Setting for this Study

The subject, David, then the fifty-nine-year-old language learner, lived in Des Moines at the time he began the study of Spanish in January of 1997, after having studied Portuguese with Rejane, a Brazilian tutor from 1996-98. The setting is significant because David chose

not to leave the state of Iowa to pursue his L2 interests and once jokingly, but accurately, wrote in an Iowa State University department publication that he had progressed in Spanish through taking advantage of L2 resources in four different countries, then he added - correction: four counties – Polk (Des Moines), Story (Ames), Jasper (Pella) and Johnson (Iowa City). He said that an important part of the challenge (and joy) of the L2 process was applying his imagination to discovering learning resources, such as the availability of native speaker tutors, locally. Study sessions with ten Spanish tutors who participated at various stages through the six years on the subject's self-styled faculty of the *escuela doméstica española* took place in the Central College Library at Pella, Drake University Library in Des Moines, Parks Library at Iowa State University, West Des Moines Public Library, Zanzibar Coffee House in Des Moines and Prairie Lights Bookstore in Iowa City.

#### The Subject and the L2 Study Plan

David is now (in 2004) a sixty-five-year-old language learner, who spoke his first Spanish sentence and conjugated his first Spanish verb at the age of fifty-nine. He had had previous experience with foreign language study at Grinnell High School (Iowa) with two years of Latin and at Cornell College (Iowa) with two years of French, but had not studied them seriously and therefore had not achieved any level of fluency or proficiency with either. He had lived in Lourenço Marques, Mozambique from 1971-74 and had learned the rudiments of Portuguese there at that time. He admits with regret that he did not take full advantage of his opportunities to study the language while living in the midst of a naturalistic learning environment in the Portuguese culture in Africa, yet he seemed to compensate later by concentrated effort with a Brazilian tutor.



He cites the availability of an ex-patriot English community in Lourenço Marques as a temptation for refuge from the daily life and language of the Portuguese city and a subtle obstacle in his total immersion in Portuguese language learning. Thus, during this period he had not achieved any notable fluency and didn't study the language again, or seriously, until 1996, when at the age of fifty-seven, he started weekly two-hour study sessions in Pella, Iowa with a native speaker from Brazil, Rejane.

The adult student and his Brazilian tutor eventually developed a study plan where the student practiced writing Portuguese in a diary and then presented his written work at the next study session for discussion and corrections. He then re-wrote that day's assignment in the corrected form as homework and also prepared the next edition of the diary entry.

The two hour session became a routine of conversation for warm-up, diary reading and grammar corrections, monologue by the student and reading from the Brazilian magazine, *Veja* (See), to focus on pronunciation. The tutor made notes on any grammar or pronunciation errors during the monologue, but did not interrupt the flow of the student's language. The last ten to fifteen minutes of the session were used to go over interlanguage, the L2 errors produced by the student in grammar and pronunciation, with explicit feedback provided by the tutor. The subject continued this Portuguese study routine on a weekly basis until December of 1998 by which time, according to reports from both student and tutor, the subject, then fifty-nine, had become an advanced speaker and writer of the Portuguese language.

However, David was living in Des Moines, Iowa at the time and, in spite of his disciplined study and notable progress, found it difficult to find an outlet to use his newly attained second language Portuguese fluency on a daily basis. Rejane, the Portuguese tutor,

suggested that David consider the study of Spanish, as 30,000 native speakers of that Romance language lived in the Des Moines area. Rejane, a Brazilian who on this rare occasion didn't mind the idea of conceding to a Spanish speaker, introduced him to Paloma from Spain living in Pella with her family. The subject thus began the study of Spanish using the same study routine developed with Rejane in the Portuguese sessions. However, it is important to note that he also continued the Portuguese sessions. Thus, he studied Portuguese on Mondays with Rejane and Spanish on Fridays with Paloma. He continued this study schedule for six months and received complaints from Rejane that his Portuguese fluency was lagging and also comments from Paloma that his Spanish was more *Portunhol* than real Spanish. When David did his first diary entry in Spanish, Paloma returned it to him, shook her head, and said, "This is not Spanish. Do it over and use only Spanish vocabulary and verbs." He was hearing that same type of criticism from Rejane in his Portuguese diary writing.

### The Portuguese-Spanish Issue

At the beginning of the dual language study, David was appeased by a similarity in vocabulary between the two Romance tongues, yet confused by the fact that even though similar in vocabulary and grammatical structure, Portuguese and Spanish were definitely distinct languages. They differed in many subtle (and overt) ways, thus the source of the confusion for this native speaker of English, who had become an advanced learner of Portuguese, then complicated the learning formula by adding the study of a third language, Spanish. Mario Pei, Romance language scholar, warned against the practice of the simultaneous study of the two languages and comments further on the Spanish-Portuguese issue:

The Portuguese vocabulary is generally close to that of Spanish, but there are occasional striking differences. “Window” is *ventana* in Spanish but *janela* in Portuguese, “to dine” is *comer* in Spanish but *jantar* in Portuguese. The story goes that a Portuguese professor, incensed at the constant reiteration of an American colleague that anyone who knows Spanish can read Portuguese, composed a letter in which not one of the words was identifiable to his Spanish speaking friend, with the exception of a few pronouns and prepositions. The Brazilians in particular are very touchy about being linguistically lumped with their Spanish-speaking neighbors. (1965, p. 335-36)

In addition to the observations of Pei, David also cites four examples (among scores) of other sources of confusion in the simultaneous study of the two languages for a native English speaker. He reports confusion with the conjugation of Spanish verbs *decir* (*dizer* in Portuguese), *querer* in both, *conocer* (*conhecer* in Portuguese) and *dar* in both. See Table 1.

**Table 1:**

**Portuguese and Spanish Word Comparisons**

Present Indicative Verb Tense Comparison:

Portuguese: *dizer* (to say)-  *digo, dizes, diz, dizemos, dizeis, dizem*

Spanish: *decir* (to say)-  *digo, dices, dice, decimos, decís, dicen*

Portuguese: *querer* (to want)-  *quero, queres, quer, queremos, quereis, quererem*

Spanish: *querer* (to want)-  *quiero, quieres, quiere, queremos, queréis, quieren*

Portuguese: *conhecer* (to know) -  *conheço, conheces, conhece, conhecemos, conheceis, conhecem*

Spanish: *conocer* (to know) -  *conozco, conoces, conoce, conocemos, conocéis, conocen*

Portuguese: *dar* (to give)  *dou, dás, dá, damos, dais, dão*

Spanish: *dar* (to give)-  *doy, das, da, damos, dais, dan*

An examination of the present indicative tense only, shown above in Table 1 , not to mention the other frequently used tenses, reveals the possibility for this confusion. In several cases, in written form, just one letter separates the Spanish from the Portuguese, as in *quiero* (I want: Spanish) and *quero* (I want: Portuguese) or as in *doy* (I give: Spanish) and *dou* (I give: Portuguese).

Although he did later take three graduate level Portuguese courses at the University of Iowa and Iowa State, after six months of the frustration with the Spanish-Portuguese study process in Pella, David decided to concentrate more exclusively on his new language, Spanish, continuing with a series of native speaking tutors. In 1999 he enrolled in advanced Spanish conversation and composition courses at Iowa State University, yet continued with one particularly effective tutor, Cecilia, a graduate student from Argentina, for three years.

Unique language experiences during this time included the subject's participation as an intern through Iowa State at Broadlawns Hospital in Des Moines where he worked for four months in the hospital's International Clinic as an interpreter. He translated doctor-patient conversations during medical examinations and also converted patient information brochures written in English to Spanish. Also, as a long-time member of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), David attended meetings of El Grupo, the Spanish speaking AA group in Des Moines, on a regular basis and gave several presentations at district and state meetings of Hispanic groups on his experience, strength and hope in AA. Both experiences, at the hospital and in AA, promoted fluency and provided spontaneous opportunities for practical application of grammar and vocabulary learned in study sessions with tutors and in formal university classes.

David studied with ten different native speaker tutors over the next six years. His first Spanish tutor was Paloma from Spain who was living in Pella, a fifty-mile drive from Des Moines, and David drove there to study with her in the Central College Library over the next twelve months. Paloma's husband, Samuel, a professor of Spanish from Ghana, also participated as tutor on occasion. In 1999, the setting changed slightly. As Dan, a retired Mexican-American, and Cecilia, an Iowa State graduate student from Argentina, answered an advertisement which David had placed in a shopper publication. He met with Dan two to three times a month at a Des Moines coffee house to work on basic conversation and with Cecilia at the Iowa State University Library to focus on grammar and conversation weekly – both over a three- year period.

In the spring of 2000, he took Spanish 403, Advanced Spanish Conversation, at Iowa State from Carmen Valentin, now a Professor of Spanish at Grinnell College, who eventually became a speaking partner, language mentor and colleague. He also added the formal approach to his language study and took various other Spanish graduate courses at Iowa State, including Advanced Spanish Composition, along with three Portuguese classes at Iowa State University and the University of Iowa from 2000-2003. Over the course of the seven-year period, David, in addition to Paloma Soria, Samuel Mate-Kodjo, Carmen Valentin, Dan Teran and Cecilia Benitez, added to his instructional staff Olga Duran, a Cuban; Rocío Prieto, another Spaniard; Ingrid Peñuela, a Colombian; Clemen Duque, also a Colombian, and Joel Chargoy, a Mexican. Claret Trejo, the present tutor (2003-2004), is from Venezuela.

## Data Sources

### Research Data

The principal data in this study is associated with the eight-year Spanish language learning experience of David, the subject, in Iowa; however, a discussion of the data from his work in the study Portuguese, also in Iowa, will be cited because of its impact on the Spanish learning progress. Data for this study, which was compared to and contrasted with the research in the related literature, was provided by the subject, David. He kept a personal diary over a seven-year period and organized a bound daily log of the notes provided by his Portuguese and Spanish language tutors, which was the source of the feedback on that day's language study session. (See samples of interlanguage notes recorded by tutors in Appendix B, page 119.) At the end of each session, the tutor and subject discussed the interlanguage employed by David during that day's work. Carmen Valentin, the subject's language study mentor, provided further direction to the Second Language Acquisition plan with weekly feedback via email and through face-to-face meetings on matters of grammar and subtleties of the Spanish language. Dr. Valentin was a sounding board on any question which David posed on matters of Spanish language learning. She was a presence during the course of the study from 2000-2004.

Data from the following assessments are analyzed as a part of this research: a) descriptive analysis of diary entries; b) Oral Proficiency Interview speaking proficiency test; c) Native Speaker-Non-Native Speaker evaluation of speaking proficiency; and, d) evaluative reports written by two native speaker tutors.

The diary entries, which are selected randomly to provide periodic information over the eight-year span of this study, are recorded in this study in L2 (Portuguese and Spanish),

then translated into English and finally discussed in a “Comment and Analysis” section. Observations are made regarding fluency, accuracy, and complexity of expression, along with notations of interlanguage. Unique events, such as diary entries recorded by the subject while on trips to various cities in the United States and overseas, were discussed .

An assessment of the subject’s L2 progress was measured by scores on the ACTFL-OPI test inventory. A version of the OPI was also employed in the NS-NSS speaking proficiency task, which was a twenty-five-minute tape recorded interview between a NS and NNS with evaluations from each of the two participants, including the self-report by the NNS. The evaluative reports on the subject’s L2 status and progress were written by Carmen Valentin and Cecilia Benitez.

### Assessment Measures

#### ACTFL-OPI and Anecdotal Reports

In the summer of 2001, David took the taped Oral Proficiency Interview of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages on the Iowa State University campus administered by Eduardo García-Villada, a native speaker of Spanish from Colombia, graduate research assistant and, at the time, a trainee tester for the ACTFL. In November of 2003, as a project in English 517, Second Language Acquisition, taught by Dr. Carol Chapelle at Iowa State, David worked with Carmen Valentin in a task designed to evaluate the SLA progress of the subject (David) in Spanish. In this assessment, the ACTFL criteria were applied to David’s twenty-five minute taped interview with Carmen Valentin. David did a self-assessment and Dr. Valentin provided her own evaluation of fluency, accuracy and complexity, criteria identified by Skehan (1989) as the output from the input-

interaction-output process. In addition, Carmen Valentin and Cecilia Benitez, an Argentine who earned her Master's Degree in Business at Iowa State University while serving as a Spanish tutor to David, provided anecdotal reports on the subject's progress and language proficiency.

The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages-Oral Proficiency Interview, established in 1986 and based on years of testing with governmental institutions and on descriptions of language proficiency used by the Interagency Language Roundtable, is designed to measure L2 performance in the skills of speaking, writing, reading and listening. It was selected as a measuring instrument in this thesis because of its reputation among language teachers throughout the world, for its clear-cut rating criteria and because of the availability of trained OPI examiners on university campuses, in particular on the Iowa State University campus, to administer the testing. Results of the OPI give the investigator a bench mark of the progress shown by the subject in second language learning and thus a basis for pursuing answers to the research questions posed on page 21.



## CHAPTER III

### DATA ANALYSIS

#### Introduction

The data used to describe and analyze the second language learning experiences and progress of the subject of this study are taken from the following sources: a) a Portuguese language diary which includes entries on interlanguage and comments from both subject and his Brazilian tutor over a three-year period; b) a Spanish language diary, which includes email correspondences and other entries with recorded interlanguage and comments from the subject and feedback from his *escuela doméstica* team of twelve tutors who contributed to the subject's language learning project; d) results of a Oral Proficiency testing; e) results of a special taped L2 Task created for a Second Language Acquisition graduate course in which the subject self-reported and his native speaker mentor evaluated his language using a modified version of ACTFL-OPI criteria; and f) evaluative reports on subject's language study from tutors.

#### Language Diaries

##### Portuguese Language Diaries

The plan of study with the Brazilian tutor, Rejane, included a two-hour session with conversation, reading and monologue by the student followed by ten to fifteen minutes of feedback from the tutor in the form of further conversation. David, the subject, kept a diary which was a consistent account of his own impressions of a particular lesson or of his progress in general and also the feedback by the tutor on nearly every session (during the

eight-year duration of Spanish study) and also in the three previous years of Portuguese language study. Even though the emphasis in this study is on Spanish, the subject's work in Portuguese is significant also in that he developed his second language learning strategy in the study of Portuguese and also used the similarities in the two languages to his advantage in the study of Spanish. There were unique Portuguese diary entries from trips to Europe and Australia during the course of the study. The diaries were bound into notebooks and organized chronologically, thus the learner not only accumulated valuable review materials but also important data for this project.

This section includes a selection of seven diary entries from the Portuguese study sessions involving Rejane, the NS tutor and David, the NNS adult student. Interlanguage is noted in parenthesis: These particular diary entries were chosen at random but with the objective of providing an adequate sample of language over the eight year span of the study. (See other samples of interlanguage notes made by tutors in various study sessions in Appendix B, page 120.)

The diary entry is noted in a structure which includes diary entry number, date, diary entry in Portuguese, English translation of the Portuguese and then the "Comment and Analysis" on the content of the diary entry.

Portuguese diary entry 1:

March 4, 1996

*O Diário: Lição de Português*

*Eu estou tantando (tentando) escrever português com o objectivo(objetivo) de aprender outra lingau (língua). Quando eu fui a Mozambique (Moçambique) em 1971, eu queria compreender português. Mas não estudei e não trabalhei para realizar um resultado*

*favorável. Agora, depois de vinte-cinco anos, eu posso apreciar melhor que falando (que a habilidade de) falar uma língua (língua) estrangeira pode ser um tesouro intelectual. (Muito melhor que palavras cruzadas). Outra vez, eu preciso utilizar disciplina e trabalho (para) aprender português melhor.*

(I am trying to write Portuguese with the objective of learning another language. When I was in Mozambique in 1971 <1971-1974>, I wanted to understand Portuguese. But I did not study enough and I didn't work in order to bring about a favorable result. Now, after twenty-five years, I can appreciate better that the ability to speak a foreign language can be an intellectual treasure. <Much better than doing cross-word puzzles>. Again (I remind myself), that I must use discipline and work in order to learn Portuguese better.)

Comment and Analysis: This diary entry was made in the first week of the third month of study with Rejane, the Brazilian tutor. Even though the subject is writing rather simplistic sentences with interlanguage and errors corrected by the tutor noted in parenthesis, it is obvious that he has had previous experience with the Portuguese language. His writing in this diary entry would be in the general category of advanced novice or lower level intermediate. The self talk here seems to be reminding the subject that in order to learn and progress in a foreign language he needs to apply the discipline and effort to the project, something that he cites that he did not do while in Mozambique. He also seems to be expressing (unknowingly) one of the tenets of the critical period theories in that as an adult he knows that he must make a conscious effort in structured study to progress in the language. There is no awareness of the natural acquisition of language by students in the nine to twelve age bracket, a time Penfield and Roberts (1959) deemed as advantageous for language acquisition, which could have presented a slight psychological barrier to the adult

learner. Previous experience probably taught the subject that hard work was a necessary ingredient to progress in L2 and he was aware that he was a learner, not an acquirer of language, even though he had had no previous knowledge of these SLA theories. Gardner might also add that the learner is expressing motivation to learn.

Portuguese diary entry 2:

April 4, 1996

*O Diário: Lição de Português (Virginia)*

*Hoje, eu parti da cidade de D.M. às oito e quinze da manhã. Agora, estou em St. Louis esperando para voar a Norfolk, Virginia. Nós chegaremos em Norfolk a (ao) meio-dia e (eu) estou planejando pegar um carro de Hertz e conduzi-lo (para conduzir-lo) a Portsmouth, o sítio do torneio de basquetebol. Durante os nosso vôo de D.M., eu conversei (conversei) com Bill Fennelly, on treinador de basquetebol da Universidade de Iowa State. Ele estava viajando a Norfolk para participar dum torneio de basquetebol de jogadoras femininas, na idade da classificação de dezoito a vinte anos.*

*Nota: Estou estudando meu Português durante esta viagem para provar minha disciplina e concentração. É um bom treino estudar com barulho e distúrbio no avião. Eu quero impressionar minha professor (professora) de Português e também impressionar-me eu-próprio ((eu mesmo) com un bom esforço). Meu escrito está perfeito sem erros? Boas notícias, pensava assim. Meu Português é muito fácil agora. Puxa. Meu Português correto é mais complicado. Então, nós estamos aterrizando em Norfolk? Não, ainda estamos esperando em St Louis por uma oportunidade para partir. Sempre, uma viagem exige paciência. Sempre. Primeira vez que eu ouvi a palavra 'aterrizar' foi em Moçambique no ano (de) 1972. Eu estava viajando com o Clube de Sporting de Lourenço Marques na selva*

*ao norte do país durante uma tempestade de chubar (chuva) e um jogador no grupo (grupo) disse: “Não vamos poder aterrizaz em Quelimane por causa da chuva.”*

(Today I left the city of D.M. at 8: 15 a.m. Now I am in St. Louis waiting to fly to Norfolk, Virginia. We will arrive in Norfolk mid-day and I am planning to pick up a car from Hertz and drive it to Portsmouth, the place of the basketball tournament. During our flight from Des Moines, I conversed with Bill Fennelly, the women’s basketball coach at Iowa State University. He was traveling to Norfolk to participate in a basketball tournament for women players eighteen to twenty years old. Are we landing in Norfolk? No, we are still waiting in St. Louis for the opportunity to depart. A trip always demands patience. Always. Note: I am studying my Portuguese during this trip in order to prove my discipline and concentration. It is good practice to study with noise and confusion on the plane. I want to impress my teacher and also impress myself with a good effort Is my writing perfect? Good news, I thought so. My Portuguese is very easy. Ha. My Portuguese (correct) is more complicated. The first time that I heard the word ‘aterrizar’ (to land) was in Mozambique in 1972. I was traveling with Sporting Club of Lourenço Marques in the north of the country in a rain storm and one player in the group (Nelson Serra) said: “We are not going to be able to land in Quelimane because of the rain.”

Comment and Analysis: In the first week of the fourth month of Portuguese study, the subject takes a business trip to Norfolk, Virginia to the Portsmouth Invitational Tournament to recruit players for overseas placement. He talks with Bill Fennelly, the Iowa State women’s basketball coach, on the flight. Interlanguage corrections by tutor are noted and also the subject’s mention of using the trip as a test of his discipline in doing his diary entries even in the noise and confusion of the airplane. There is also a reference to his

experiences in Mozambique in 1972, twenty-four years before, and recall of the world ‘atterrizar’. At times, cultural experiences such as these make an indelible impression on a learner who never forgets the word associated with the experience.

Portuguese diary entry 3:

June 14, 1996

*O Diário: Lição de Português*

*Hoje, eu estou concentrando-me no objetivo para usar as palavras novas da lição de segundo-feira e quinta-feira desta semana. Talvez, (eu) vou (vá) poder usar as palavras novas numa história ou talvez (as) usarei em pensamentos individuais. Eu não vou debater este assunto, mas (eu) vou escrever invés de debater. Por outro lado, talvez vai ser fácil debater. Embora, se eu não posso (possa) usar todas palavras novas, o resultado não vai ser uma tragédia. Mas, se (eu) posso (possa) ter sucesso, minha professora vai poder bater minhas palmas (para) reconhecer meu esforço. Eu sei que (eu) preciso fazer um esforço enorme.*

(Today I am concentrating on the objective to use the new words of this week's Monday and Wednesday lesson. I am not sure of the use of the present subjunctive, although I am becoming more aware of its possible uses and aware that I need to start to study it. Maybe I am going to be able to use the new words in a story or perhaps I will use them in individual thoughts. I am not going to debate this subject, but I am going to write instead of debate. Even so, if I cannot use all the new words, the result is not going to be a tragedy. But, if I am successful, my teacher can shake my hand to acknowledge my effort. I know that I need to make an enormous effort.

Comment and Analysis: This diary entry was made six and a half months into the program of study and one notes progress in putting together more complex sentences and using the future tense of verbs more frequently. The student's awareness of motivation is present. When asked about his frequent referral to motivation, he explained that he felt that he had not taken full advantage of his opportunity with the Portuguese language while he was living in Mozambique and that he did not want that to happen again. Thus, his disappointment in his language study in Mozambique has become a source of strong motivation later. Interlanguage notations include the omission of the subjunctive, too frequent use of subject pronouns, especially *eu* (I) and also the introduction of the need to use object pronouns, although the Portuguese spoken on the street many times ignores object pronouns. . . . *ou talvez usarei* (*os usarei*). . . Or perhaps I will use (or perhaps I will use them).

Portuguese diary entry 4:

March 18, 1997                      *O Diário: Lição de Português*

*Prezado Nelson,*

*Foi muito bom ver voce (você) novamente depois de muitos anos. Temos a Experiencia ( Experiência) de Moçambique em comum e fica uma ligação forte. Também eu sempre tenho tido respeito por ti como um jogador e agora como um bom treinador. E Nelson foi boa noite em Lisboa com Rosa, Rita, Phillipe e você. Obrigado. Eu espero que nos (nós) possamos trabalhar juntos em procurar emprego para os seus jogadores – David Dias e outro jogador de Guinéa. Acho que (eu) posso conseguir um melhor salario (salário) num outro país da Europa por causa dos passaportes daqueles jogadores. Duvido que eles*

*possam jogar na Grécia, Italia, etc., mas (eu) acho que eles talvez possam fazer bem num país de nível medio (médio). Talvez, podemos considerar um plano passo a passo para eles – nunca se sabe, qualquer dia um jogador pode (poderia) subir e alcançar um nível alto. Se você concordasse, poderíamos fazer um plano para adjudar os jogadores e para todo mundo ganhar um pouco dinheiro. Nelson, nos (nós) podemos planejar 50-50 relativo aos honorarios deste negocio. (negócio). Que é o que você acha?*

*Abraços. D. Adkins*

(Dear Nelson: It was very good to see you again after so many years. We have the Mozambique experience in common and it is a strong bond. Also I always have had respect for you as a basketball player and now as a very good coach. And Nelson it was a good night with Rosa, Rita, Phillipe and you. Thank you. I hope that we can work together in finding a job for your players – David Dias and the other player from Guinea. I think that I can find a better salary in another country of Europe because of their passports. I doubt that they can play in Greece, Italy, etc. but I think that they maybe can do well in a mid-level country. Perhaps, we can consider a plan step by step for them, you never know, some day a player could improve and reach a better level. If you agreed, we could make a plan to help the players and for everyone to make a little money. Nelson, we can plan 50-50 relative to the commissions of this business. What do you think?

An embrace, D. Adkins)

Comment and Analysis: Written after a January 1997 visit by the subject to Lisbon, this dairy entry is in the form of a personal letter to Nelson Serra , a former basketball player from Mozambique, and at the time of the letter, a coach in Lisbon. David was the coach of Sporting de Lourenço Marques in 1972-73 when Sporting won the National Championship of



Portugal in Luanda, Angola and Nelson was a key player on that team. This letter is an example of practical application of the language for purposes of business communication. Regarding interlanguage noted by the tutor, the use of the accents is still inconsistent, but one prominent change is the more frequent use of the present and imperfect subjunctive. (*Eu espero que nós possamos trabalhar juntos* - present subjunctive, I hope that we can work together. Also the accented *nós* which distinguishes the subjective pronoun “we” and the object “us”. Another example of the present subjunctive is the sentence as follows: *Duvido que elles possam jogar*. . . I hope that they can player. . . The imperfect subjunctive in the introductory clause is followed by the conditional in this sentence – *Se você concordasse, poderíamos fazer um plano*. . . If you agreed, we could make a plan. . .

Portuguese diary entry 5:

August 12, 1997      *O Diário: Lição de Português (Australia)*

*Novamente, (eu) estou sentado no aeroporto de D.M. esperando pelo meu vôo até Dallas até L.A. .e hoje à noite, (eu) voy (vou) para Austrália com chegada lá na quarta-feira (depois duma mundança (mudança) de tempo de dezesseis horas a frente- por exemplo, quando são duas horas da tarde aqui são seis horas da manhã do próximo dia e em adição, há a mudança de dezesseis horas por causa de Dateline Internacional. E quando eu volto (voltar) para D.M., (eu) partirei da Austrália na mesma hora no mesmo dia que chegarei em L.A. Meu plano de estudo durante esta viagem inclui o seguinte: a) escrever no diário; b) reler o diário corrigido; c) revisar minhas notas das lições concernentes ao vocabulário, a gramática, e a pronúncia: d) leer Veja; e e) visitar um restaurante brasileiro o português na Austrália.*

(Again, I am seated in the Des Moines airport waiting for my flight to Dallas and to Los Angeles and tonight I am going to Australia with arrival Wednesday. (It is Monday now here). There is a sixteen-hour time difference because of the International Dateline. And when I return to D.M. I will leave Australia the same hour and same day that I arrive in L.A. My study plan during this trip is as follows: a) write in the diary; b) re-read the corrected diary entries; c) review my notes of the lessons concerned with vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation; d) read Veja (Brazilian magazine); and e) visit a Brazilian or Portuguese restaurant in Australia.)

Comment and Analysis: This diary entry was made twenty months into the program of study and the sentences of the writer are flowing better than those of a year ago. The tutor has noted some grammatical errors, such as the spelling (*mundança* corrected to *mudança*) and over-use of the subject pronoun *eu*. A notable form of interlanguage corrected by the tutor is the Portuguese future subjunctive tense, a construction seldom used in Spanish. . . *Quando eu voltar, eu partirei da Austrália*. . This is translated, “When I return (will return), I will depart from Australia. *Voltar* is expressed in the future subjunctive and *partirei* in the future indicative. The setting of the writing is of interest here because the subject is on a business trip (he is a professional basketball recruiter for the overseas clubs) in Queensland, Australia. He had previously lived in Brisbane from 1978-1980, the capital of Queensland, and had worked for two years as that state’s Director of Basketball Coaching. He had also lived in Hobart, Tasmania (1985-1989), where he had coached the Hobart Devils in the National Basketball League of Australia. It was his association with basketball that led to the opportunities which started his journey in language study in Mozambique in 1971.

Portuguese diary entry 6:

August 15, 1997

*O Diário: Lição de Português*

*Eu estou voando num avião pequeno da cidade de Cairns, Australia até a cidade de Townsville no estado de Queensland na Austrália. O clima de Queensland é semelhante ao clima da Flórida, muito tropical. É inverno aqui agora, mas não posso distinguir entre o inverno da Queensland e o verão no estado de Iowa. Eu estava parando(parado) no hotel em Cairns por só vinte-e-quatro horas. Eu falei, olho no olho, com dois jogadores e um oficial do clube de Cairns. Eu quis falar com o treinador também, mas minha agenda estava cheia; meu vôo sai de Cairns uma hora demais cedo; e eu estava muito cansado ontêm quando eu cheguei. (Eu sai de DM na segunda-feira às quatro horas da tarde e cheguei em Cairns às duas horas da tarde no quarta-feira, segundo o relógio local. Agora, (eu) estou deseveolvendo (desenvolvendo) a disciplina de estudar o Português sob qualquer circunstâncias – agora mesmo o nosso avião é (está) ruidoso e os (as) condições de estudo são difíceis por causa dos turistas de Japón que falam berrantemente. Acho que elles tinham estudado no programa de inglês que vi às cinco da manhã no hotel, mas nesta ocasião falam só sua lingua nativa.*

(I am flying in a small airplane from the city of Cairns, Australia to the city of Townsville in the state of Queensland in Australia. The climate of Queensland is similar to the climate of Florida, very tropical. It is winter here now, but I cannot distinguish between the winter of Queensland and the summer in the state of Iowa. I was staying in a hotel in Cairns for only twenty-four hours. I spoke, face-to-face, with two basketball players and an official of the Cairns basketball club. I wanted to speak with the coach also, but my schedule was full; my flight departed Cairns one hour too early (to talk to the coach), and I was very

tired yesterday when I arrived. (I left from Des Moines on Monday at 4 p.m. and arrived in Cairns at 2 p.m. on Wednesday according to the local clock). Now I am developing the discipline of studying Portuguese under whatever circumstances – right now our plane is very noisy and the conditions for study are difficult because of the tourists from Japan who are talking noisily. I think that they had studied in the English program which I saw in the hotel, but now they use only their native tongue, Japanese.)

Comment and analysis: The recording of the Australian business trip continues here in this diary entry and the flight over the Great Barrier Reef from Cairns to Townsville in a small plane filled with Japanese tourists and the emphasis on comment shifts from grammar to context. Upon review of his notes on this trip, David recalled his reference to the English program at the hotel where he was staying. He reports that English was being taught to Japanese in boardrooms and meeting rooms of his hotel and he looked in on a large, intense class in session at 5 a.m. that very morning. He further notes that he found little opportunity to use his Portuguese in Australia with the exception being in Sydney where he spoke with a Brazilian waiter at an (Australian) café and learned that about 12,000 Brazilians were living in Sydney at the time with Bondi Beach as their regular meeting place on Sunday mornings.

Portuguese diary entry 7:

August 22, 1997

*Licção de Português*

*Eu gostaria de estudar espanhol com una professora que fala (fale) como lingua materna, semanalmente talvez duas horas cada lição. Acho que tenho progresado muito na lingua portuguesa, mas me sinto frustrado porque é difícil usá-lo aqui em D.M. Seria mas fácil poder praticar espanhol aqui porque existem 30,000 falantes do idioma espanhol.*

*Falei com Rejane e me disse que ela ia falar com Paloma Sorria, uma espanhola que vive em Pella, sobre meu interesse ao aprender sua lingua materna. Se Paloma considerasse a minha proposta de estudo, estarei (estaría) disponível para planejar um programa das duas línguas. Não sei, mas não acho que o meu estudo de espanhol não atrapalharia na minha aprendizagem do Português. Eu estou planejando seguir adiante com o Português nas segundas e as aulas de espanhol mais tarde na semana. Sinto como se estivesse traindo o Português, meu amigo constante por quase dois anos. Por outro lado, aguardo ao desafio duma terceira lingua.*

(I would like to study Spanish with a teacher that speaks Spanish as a native language, weekly sessions perhaps for two hours per session. I believe that I have progressed a great deal in the Portuguese language, but I feel frustrated because it is difficult to use it here in Des Moines. It would be easier to practice Spanish here because there are 30,000 native speakers in this area. I spoke with Rejane and she said that she was going to speak with Paloma Soria, a Spaniard who lives in Pella, about my interest in learning her language. If she would consider my proposal, I would be available to plan a program for the study of both languages. I don't know, but I don't think that my work in Spanish would hamper my learning of Portuguese. I am planning to go forward with the Portuguese on Mondays and the Spanish later in the week (Fridays). I feel as if I were betraying the Portuguese, my constant friend for nearly two years. On the other hand, I look forward to the challenge of a third language.

Comment and Analysis: This is a particularly important dairy entry because the progress by the learner in the complexity of expression is evident with the use of the imperfect subjunctive - *Se Paloma considerasse a minha proposta*, . . . If Paloma considered

my proposal and also *Eu sinto como se estivesse traindo o Português*. . . I feel as if I were betraying the Portuguese. In addition to the grammatical benchmarks, David decides to pursue the study of Spanish, in addition to the Portuguese, with a native speaker as tutor. He makes the following notable observations - that he doesn't think that adding the study of Spanish will interfere with his Portuguese progress. That is not the case as is noted in later entries. The Spanish-Portuguese issue becomes a significant and recurring obstacle to his fluency in both languages.

This marks the end of the diary data taken from on the subject's study of Portuguese and also signals the start of the Spanish diary entries in the next section

### Spanish Language Diaries

The following are diary entries recorded by David with various native speaking Spanish tutors including Paloma Soria, the first such tutor; Cecilia Benitez, Carmen Valentine, Ingrid Peñuela, and Maria Clemencia Duque in the Spanish language. The email exchanges with Carmen Valentin and Cecilia Benitez are a part of the subject's dairy and considered dairy entries even though these emails appear in the form of personal correspondence.

Spanish diary entry 1:

August 29, 1997

*Primera Lección de Español con Paloma Soria*

*Tive (tuve) minha (mi) primera lección de español com (con) Paloma hoy em (en) Pella na (en la) biblioteca de Central College. Não (no) quero (quiero) usar o (el) diccionario demais, (demasiado) mas estou consciente (me doy cuenta de que) de que faço erro tras erro (me equivoco error tras error) no (en el) español. Estudamos (estudiamos) o*

*siguiente (lo siguiente) hoy: 1) Pronombres: yo-nosotros, usted-ustedes, él-ella, ellos-ella;. 2) Os días de la semana: lunes, martes, miercoles, jueves, viernes, sábado, Domingo; 3) La conjugación de ser: yo soy nosotros/as somos, tú eres vosotros/as sois, él, ella es, ellos, ellas son; y 4) El tiempo y los días en oraciones sencillas. Hoy es viernes. Mañana es sábado. Ayer fue jueves. Son la una y veinte de la tarde.*

(I had my first lesson in Spanish with Paloma today in Pella in the Central College Library. I do not want to use the dictionary too much but I realize that I am making error after error (in mixing words of the two languages). We studied the following today: 1) Pronouns: I-we, you-you (plural), he-she, they (m.)-they (f.); 2) The days of the week: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursdays, Friday, Saturday, Sunday; 3) The conjugation of *ser* (to be): I am – we are, you are- you are, he is-she is, they are-they are; and 4) The time and the days in simple sentences: Today is Friday. Tomorrow is Saturday. Yesterday was Thursday. It is 1:20 p.m Note: At the end of the first lesson, I mentioned to Paloma that I liked to read. She asked me if I ever read Spanish language authors. I said normally not. However, as I drove the forty-five minutes from Pella back home to Des Moines, I decided to start with Love in the Time of Cholera by *Gabriel García Márquez* in Spanish with an English version also available as a resource. After reading this book, I made a decision to read Spanish books only for the next year and was able to carry out that commitment. The reading exercise increased my vocabulary and also gave me insight into grammatical structures “in action.”

Comment and Analysis: This is the subject’s first lesson in Spanish with the native-speaker tutor, Paloma, in Pella, Iowa. The confusion between the Spanish and Portuguese becomes an immediate issue and source of confusion. The tutor notes the interlanguage

which occurs frequently. Comparing the August 22, 1997 diary entry written in Portuguese with this entry of August 29, 1997 expressed in Spanish shows a major difference in the student's confidence and abilities in the two languages. This lesson marks the first in a number of frustrating experiences because of the similarity between Spanish and Portuguese, yet the fact that they are also distinct and different languages always asserts itself. David (Adkins, 2000: See Appendix, p. 106) comments on the Spanish-Portuguese simultaneous study as follows:

In the first six months of the simultaneous study of Spanish and Portuguese, I found myself speaking and writing *Portunhol*, a mixture of the two languages. At one point, Paloma Soria became frustrated with my mixing Portuguese words into Spanish dialogue. She actually glared at me and said, "You should visit Galicia. They speak *Portunhol* there." (Galicia is a region of northern Spain which shares a common border with Portugal and where a mixture of the two languages is spoken.) Her message was important. It reinforced the importance of distinguishing between (very) similar Portuguese and Spanish words.

Spanish diary entry 2:

September 5, 1997

*Lección de Español*

*Es difícil ir de la habiliade de hablar con fluidez no (en el) português (portugués) a la confusão (confusión) duma ( de una) terceira (tercera) língua (lengua). Hoje (hoy) na (en la) lección estudamos (estudiamos) lo siguiente: 1) Oraciones sencillas: Eu sou um aluno novo (no Português)=Yo soy un alumno nuevo (de español). Tú eres la profesora de español (español). Ele é o marido da minha professora (português).= Él es el marido de mi profesora. (español). Nós somos alunos de línguas estrangeiras. (português)=Nosotros somos alumnus (alumnos) de lenguas extranjerias. (español). 2) Los articulos: el (los) marido(s), la(s) profesora(s), el (los) cuaderno (s). a + el = al, a + la= a + la (no cambio).*



(It is difficult to go from the ability to speak fluently in Portuguese to the confusion of a third language. Today in the lesson we studied the following: 1) Simple sentences in Portuguese and Spanish: I am a new student. You are the Spanish teacher. He is the husband of my teacher. We are students of foreign language. 2) Articles: the husband (singular and plural), the teacher (singular and plural), the notebook (singular and plural). The contraction of “a + el” (to the followed by masculine noun) and no contraction of “a + la” followed by a feminine noun.)

Comment and Analysis: Again, the contrast between the advanced level of student ability in Portuguese and the novice level of the student in Spanish is striking. The struggle in the interlanguage continues as will continue the paradox of similarity causing confusion.

Spanish diary entry 3:

October 12, 1997

*Lección de Español*

*Yo siempre quiero seguir adelante con los verbos, el vocabulário y la grámatica tan rápidamente como posible, apesar de que acabo de comenzar de estudiar español. Debido a mis experiencias con Portugués, no tengo miedo de una tercera lengua. Hoy trabajamos na (en la) conjugación dos verbos – haber and tener. Ambos significan “to have”, pero se usa haber con el participle (participio) passado (pasado) para formar el tempo del perfecto presente y tener es un verbo de la posesión. Haber: yo he – nosotros hemos, tú has – vosotros habéis, él, ella ha- ellos, ellas han. Por ejemplo – 1) Yo he escrito en dos lenguas extranjeras y yo he leído también en las dos; 2) Tú has estudiado (estudiado) duas (dos) lenguas incluindo (incluyendo) inglés e español; y 3) Él ha ensinado (enseñado) español en tres paises (países) incluyendo Espanha (España), EE.UU y Ghana. Tener: yo tengo -*

*nosotros tenemos, tú tienes-vosotros tenéis, él, ella tiene-ellos, ellas tienen. Ejemplos: Tenemos tres livros (libros), pero ellos tienen só (sólo) tienen dois (dos). Passamos (Pasamos) 30 minutos da aula (de la classe) conversando con el uso de haber e tener en varias formas.*

(I always want to go forward with Spanish verbs, grammar and vocabulary as rapidly as possible, even though I have just begun to study it. I have no fear about a third language because of my experiences in Portuguese. Today we worked on the conjugation of *haber* and *tener*. Both mean “to have”, but you use *haber* with the past participle to form the present perfect tense and *tener* is a verb of possession. *Haber*: I have-we have, you have-you have, she, he has-they (f.) have, they (m.) have. For example – 1) I have written in two foreign languages and I have read also in the two; 2) You have studied two languages including English and Spanish; and 3) He has taught Spanish in three countries including Spain, the U.S. and Ghana. *Tener*: *yo tengo – nosotros tenemos, tú tienes-vosotros tenéis, él, ella tiene- ellos, ellas tienen.* For example, *We have three books, but they have only two.* We spent thirty minutes in class today conversing in the various forms of *haber* and *tener*.

Comment and Analysis: The matter of motivation of the learner again surfaces in this entry with a statement of a desire to go forward with the study of the Spanish language and he sees verbs, grammar and vocabulary as the key elements. Indeed, the tutor and student do go another step in this session with the conjugation of *haber* which allows the use of the present perfect tense in Spanish and also with the conjugation of *tener*, a handy and oft-used verb. The interlanguage notations from the tutor continue, such as *ensinar* (*enseñar* in Spanish: to teach), *aula* (frequently used in Portuguese to mean class) and *la clase* (employed in Spanish), *livro* (Portuguese) interlanguage for *libro* (Spanish), and *dos* (two in Spanish)

regardless of gender of the noun described, yet in Portuguese *duas* and *dois* are gender specific).

The ability to apply the newly learned verbs in conversation and writing is the mark of an experienced language learner, thus the impact of the previous experience in Portuguese continues to show itself as an obvious asset to the learner, not necessarily from the point of view of “easily” picking up Spanish, but more in terms of familiarity with syntax and phonology and the continuing desire to learn. David, the subject, seems aware of the fact that Spanish is a new and distinct language in spite of various similarities with Portuguese. Pei (1973, 178) notes, “Portuguese in its written form presents greater similarities in Spanish than to any of the other Romance tongues.” Table 2 below shows examples of these similarities between Portuguese and Spanish.

**Table 2:**

**Similarities in Written Portuguese and Spanish with English Translation**

<b>Portuguese</b>	<b>Spanish</b>	<b>English</b>
<i>reconhecendo</i>	<i>reconociendo</i>	recognizing
<i>os usos</i>	<i>los usos</i>	the uses
<i>eu tenho posto</i>	<i>yo he puesto</i>	I have placed
<i>trabalhar com</i>	<i>trabajar con</i>	to work with
<i>falando em voz alta</i>	<i>hablando en voz alta</i>	Speaking in loud voice
<i>assim como</i>	<i>así como</i>	so
<i>um programa</i>	<i>un programa</i>	a program
<i>Tenho olhado</i>	<i>he mirado</i>	I have looked
<i>estava</i>	<i>estaba</i>	I was
<i>tive</i>	<i>tuve</i>	I had

The similarity in written Spanish and Portuguese among several selected verbs and other words and reinforces the statement by Pei. This similarity can be a source of confusion for the learner, but it is also a factor in driving the progress of the learning process and feeding the confidence of the learner. However, with the tendency of an L1 English speaker to become confused in learning the two languages simultaneously, the similarity between the two is at times is a mixed blessing and the confidence is short-lived.

Spanish diary entry 4:

December 13, 1997                      *Lección de Español (La iglesia)*

*Fui a la misa de la iglesia catolica (católica) chamada (llamda) Visitación en Des Moines. Era una misa especial a causa de la celebración de Navidad. Los jovenes (jóvenes) bailaron y cantaron y se vistieron en el (con el) traje de los indios de Mexico.(México) La iglesia (iglesia) estaba llena del pueblo del mundo latino. El sacerdote, un joven norte americano habló bien español y con emoción fuerte. Me senté al lado de una familia mexicana (mexicana), una pareja con dos niños bonitos. Me presenté a ellos y los felicité sobre (por) a su familia hermosa. Fue una atmosfera (atmósfera) casual y ruidosa, pero también sagrada. Me sentí como si fuera (estuviera) en México o América de Sur. La misa durou (duró) casi dos horas y aunque la disfruté, yo fui (me sentí) aliviado cuando la (el) sacerdote terminó las festividades. Conocí (conocía) a dos hombres y una muchacha a (en) la misa – Arnulfo y su hija, Adriana, y Francesco Velez de Colombia. Arnulfo y Adriana son mis compañeros del grupo de A.A. y Francesco es del grupo llamado “oradores.” Adriana tiene doce anos (años) y es una muchacha hermosa, muy mexicana con complexión morena y ojos grandes. Ella es una alumna en la escuela Santa Familia asociada con la Iglesia*

*Visitación. Las clases ahí son en inglés, pero todo el mundo (los alumnos) habla español como lengua materna. Los niños van a ganar la ventaja (ventaja) de hablar bien inglés lo que es un regalo de sus padres y algo que los padres no tienen.*

(I went to the mass at the Visitation Catholic Church. It was a special mass because of the celebration of Christmas. Youngsters danced and sang and dressed in the costumes of the Indians of Mexico. The church was full of Hispanic people. The priest, a young North American, spoke Spanish well and with strong emotion. I sat next to a Mexican family, a couple with two children. I introduced myself to them and congratulated them on their beautiful family. It was a casual and noisy atmosphere, but also sacred. I felt as if I were in Mexico or South America. The mass lasted about two hours and even though I enjoyed it, I was relieved when the priest ended the service. I knew three people there – Arnulfo and his daughter, Adriana, and Francesco Velez from Colombia. Arnulfo and Adriana are friends from the Hispanic A.A. group (El Grupo) and Francesco is from the Hispanic Toastmaster's Group in Des Moines. Adriana is twelve-years-old and is a pretty young girl with dark skin and eyes. She is a student at Holy Family School, which is associated with Visitation Catholic Church. The classes there are in English, but everyone speaks Spanish as their first language. The children are going to gain a big advantage by learning English – that is a gift from their parents and something that their parents do not have.)

Comment and Analysis: This entry introduces a new dimension to the learner's program of study and focuses on the cultural aspect. He chooses the Christmas mass of a Catholic church (in Des Moines) with a large Hispanic congregation as the focus of this learning experience. Interacting with native speakers of Spanish in their own cultural space, such as the church, yet within the larger setting of the American city, is an attempt by the

learner to replace visiting another country during his learning process in Spanish. Watson-Gegeo and Nielsen (Hall, 2003) write that there is more to SLA than “merely acquiring linguistic structures, and that language learning and use are shaped by socio-political processes” – including culture. Another notable aspect of this entry is the phonetic and orthographic aspects of the Portuguese-Spanish discussion, for example the pronunciation of the Spanish *llamada* and the Portuguese *chamada* as well as the Spanish *duró* and the Portuguese *durou*, which are spelled differently but pronounced the same.

Spanish diary entry 5:

February 14, 1998

*Lección de Español (A.A.)*

*Esta noche yo estoy aquí para desrroyer (desarrollar) más disciplina y humildad en mi vida en general y también en el proceso de aprender la lengua española por el (a través del) programa de los 12 pasos de Alcohólicos Anónimos. Entré en A.A. en 1983 y no htomado ni una gota de alcohol desde aquel día. He asistido a esta reunion hispánica de A.A anteriormente, pero nunca he hablado en frente del grupo, y me doy cuenta de que escribo mejor de que hablo y entiendo. Tengo más confianza en mi comunicación escrita. Planeo hablar en frente del grupo esta noche para compartir mis experiencias, valor y esperanza, lo normal en el formato de las reuniones. Voy a decir algo de lo siguiente: me doy cuenta de que mi presencia aquí además de mi acento y a veces mi español crudo deben molestar (a) alguns (algunos) miembros. Entiendo, no obstante, estoy aquí. Que es porque (Por eso) les pido su paciencia y tolerancia que son virtudes del programa de A.A. (Aquí ellos dicen “doble A” en vez de A.A.)*

*Yo he asistido a reuniones (habladas en inglés) lo que tenían (donde había) miembros de otros países aprendiendo inglés y luchando con la pronunciación y la gramática. Yo puedo identificar (identificarme) bien con ellos y tal vez ustedes también puedan identificarse en su uso del inglés. Yo he aprendido mucho de A.A. y también mucho aquí en El Grupo. Tuve que usar la Oración de Serenidad para encontrar el valor para (de) entrar aquella puerta (por aquella puerta) la primera vez meses atrás. Y también tengo que aplicarla esta noche antes de hablar. A los miembros nuevos, bienvenidos. Su poder superior los ha directado (dirigido) por las puertas, ahora es su responsabilidad (responsabilidad) quedarse y aprovechar esta oportunidad enorme. Hoy en día mi programa de recuperación es sencillo. No tomo hoy y no he tomado por más que (de) quinze años. Todavía asisto a reuniones de A.A. y interactuo con otros compañeros. Yo uso los doce pasos, El Libro Grande y las Oración de Serenidad en mi vida. Si yo puedo ayudarles con su programa, por favor, pida me (pidanmélo). Regresa. (Regresen). Día a día, poco a poco, esta programa funciona. Gracias. Un día a la vez.*

(I am here tonight to develop more discipline and humility in my life in general in the process of learning the Spanish language through the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. I came to A.A. in 1983 and have not drank a drop of alcohol since that day. I have attended this meeting previously but never have spoken (at any length) in front of the group, and I realize that I write better than I speak (in Spanish) and have more confidence in my written communication. I do plan to speak tonight to share my experiences, strength and hope, what is a normal procedure in A.A. meetings. I am going to say something like the following: I realize my presence here in addition to my accent and non-native Spanish annoys some of you. But I am here. Because of this I ask your patience and tolerance, which

are a part of this program. (They say “double A” here instead of A.A.) I have attended meetings spoken in English where there were present people learning the English language and struggling with the pronunciation and grammar (like me). I can identify with them and maybe you can too. I have learned much in A.A. and from this group. I had to use the Serenity Prayer to find the strength to come through that door the first time a few months ago and also tonight I have to use it in order to stand up here and speak. I would like to welcome the new members. Your higher power has guided you here now it is your responsibility to stay and take advantage of a great opportunity. Today my program of recovery is simple. I don’t drink alcohol today and haven’t for fifteen years. I still go to meetings regularly, spend time with other recovering people and use the Twelve Steps, The Big Book and the Serenity Prayer in my life. If I can be of service to any recovering person here, please ask. And come back. Day by day and little by little this program does work. One day at a time. Thank you.)

Comment and Analysis: The interlanguage corrections by the tutor continue (*desarroyar: desarmollar*). The use of correct prepositions is also emphasized here in the corrected copy of the interlanguage. The learner’s participation in the A.A. group is another example of participating in Hispanic cultural events available in the local community. This was appropriate because he was also in recovery through A.A. and was able eventually to develop a form of a bond with the members of El Grupo. David mentioned that he found it difficult to understand the Spanish spoken at the meetings in that it is very colloquial and also full of localisms and vulgarisms (profanity). He also notes that he feels that he writes better than he speaks and has more confidence in his written communication in Spanish. He



learned the meaning and use of “chinga”, the all purpose Mexican vulgarism and “coño”, the same type of word used in Latin America.

Spanish diary entry 6:

September 22, 1999

*Email de David a Cecilia, la nueva tutora*

*Subj: la clase el jueves a las 3:30*

*Fecha: 9/22/99*

*C – Estaré allí como planeado a las 3:30 en la biblioteca mañana, me gustaría concentrarme en dar un discurso largo para practicar mi pronunciación y la gramática. Esta semana, he pasado a limpio todas las notas, las que hizo en cuanto a las correcciones de mis discursos en las clases. Es un ejercicio valioso – he aprendido mucho de las correcciones. También, por favor, mañana, explíqueme la diferencia entre “puede ser expresado” y “puede estar expresado” – en cuanto a la regla para seleccionar el verbo correcto en este ejemplo. Espero que ud pueda arreglar (encontrar) tiempo para disfrutar el otoño dorado aquí – esta estación es muy espiritual y es única en esta región de los EE.UU. Adoro el otoño y la amenaza del invierno durante esta estación, la que le da más significado y más intensidad – como la vida misma – breve pero importante y bonita. . . bastante filosofía. Hasta mañana.*

(I will be there as planned at 3:30 in the library tomorrow, I would like to concentrate in giving a long monologue to practice my pronunciation and grammar. This week I made corrected copies of the corrections you made in the last class. It is a valuable exercise (correcting the errors) – I have learned a great deal from the corrections. Also, please, tomorrow explain to me the difference between *puede ser expresado* and *puede estar*

*expresado* (use of *ser* and *estar* in this case) – regarding the rule in choosing the right verb in this example. I hope that you can find time to enjoy the golden autumn here – this season is very spiritual and unique in this region. I love the autumn and the threat of winter during this season which gives it more meaning and more intensity – like life itself – short but important and beautiful. Enough philosophy. See you tomorrow.

Comment and Analysis: David, the subject, communicates here by email to Cecilia, the new tutor, about the focus of the next lesson, recognizing the value of rewriting the list of errors provided by the tutor, the interlanguage from the previous session of study.

Spanish diary entry 7:

November 28, 1999

*Lección de Español (Cecilia)*

*Yo he estudiado con Cecilia desde abril de este año y estoy muy contento de que ella esté aquí en Iowa y tenga ganas de ayudarme con mi español. El esposo de Cecilia, Marcos, trabaja como ingeniero (ingeniero) para una empresa internacional de Des Moines y Cecilia asiste a la Universidad de Iowa State como alumna en el programa de MBA. La pareja es de Argentina. Me puse en contacto con Cecilia a través de un publicitario en un periódico aquí y ahora manejo mi coche a Ames una vez por semana para estudiar con Cecilia en la biblioteca de ISU. Estamos concentrándonos a través de conversación en “interlanguage”, la lengua producida de un hablante no-nativo (Gass) – específicamente, quiero decir la identificación, discusión y corrección de mis errores en la pronunciación y la gramática. Fue una sesión de estudio muy productiva. Las notas de interlanguage de la lección de hoy:*

(I have studied with Cecilia since April and I am pleased that she is here in Iowa and is interested in helping me with my Spanish. Her husband, Marcos, works as an engineer for an international company in Des Moines and Cecilia attends Iowa State University as a graduate student in a Master of Business Administration (MBA) program. The couple is from Argentina. I made contact with Cecilia through an advertisement in a local newspaper (shopper) and now I drive to Ames once a week to study with her at the Iowa State University Library. We are concentrating on interlanguage, the language produced by a non-native speaker – specifically I mean the identification, discussion and correction of my errors in grammar and pronunciation. This was a very good study session.)

Comment and Analysis: Even though Chomsky (1959) thinks that error correction is not productive since he reasons that language is acquired not learned, David, the subject, asks the question: “How can an adult learner take maximum benefit of the knowledge of a native speaker tutor if she doesn’t correct his errors and how can he improve unless he strives and studies to correct these errors? It doesn’t necessarily require a native speaker to correct interlanguage, but some subtleties of L2 do escape the near native speaker. The ideal tutor is the native speaker with a linguistics background. Sometimes, i.e. normally, learning from error correction requires plain old concentrated study and repetition. Repetition of correct technique is a time tested learning principle and correction of errors leads to correct technique.” Chomsky might answer that since he (the learner) had long ago passed the critical period window of 9-12 years of age in Second Language Acquisition, David has no choice but to make a conscious effort to learn in lieu of acquiring foreign languages. In reviewing the subject’s notes from this lesson with Cecilia and her feedback, syntactic and phonetic interlanguage are most prominent.

Spanish diary entry 8: Email interchange with Carmen Valentin

February 21, 2000

*Intercambio de email con Carmen Valentin*

*Hola Carmen, ¿Cómo le va? Espero que bien. La primavera viene. Por favor, cuál, quiero decir cuál es la diferencia entre los siguientes: 1. estaba más productivo viviendo en mis treintas de lo que estaba en mis veinte. (correcto?) 2. estaba consciente de que mi vida tenía más calidad. . o de la que? Otra cosa. Tomamos la decision de esperar hasta habíamos regresado a los EE.UU o hasta que habíamos? Quiero agregar la explicación y la clarificación a mi lista de las pequeñas cosas que ‘estrangular’ mi español. Soy en serio porque tengo tal lista. Quiero evitar repetir las mismas equivocaciones. . . gracias. DA*

(Hello Carmen - how is it going. . well, I hope. . spring is coming. . please what is the difference between the following? 1. I was more productive in my thirties than I was in my twenties. (is that correct?) 2. I was aware that my life had more quality. Or do I use a relative pronoun here? . . another thing. . we make the decision to wait until we had returned to the U.S. or until *that* we had returned? I want to add the explanation and the clarification to my list of little things that strange my Spanish. I am serious, I have such list. I want to avoid repeating the same mistakes. . . thank you)

*Hola Dave, yo estoy muy bien disfrutando de estos dias “calurosos”, aunque estemos rodeados de nieve. Aquí van las respuestas a sus preguntas:*

*1. “Fue más productivo vivir en mis treinta (en mi treintena) de lo que lo fue mis veinte (en mi veintena)”. Usamos el preterito porque, aunque es una acción habitual en el pasado, vemos este pasado como un tiempo ya terminado, un conjunto de años o hechos ya completo, cerrado. Usamos el relativo “lo que” porque el antecedente es una idea, un concepto, un acción, algo abstracto que no podemos coger, tocar.*

2. “Era consciente de que mi vida tenía más calidad”. Aquí no utiliza el artículo “la” entre “de” y “que” no es un pronombre relativo sino una conjunción que introduce una oración dependiente que actúa como complemento del verbo principal “estar consciente de”.

3. “Tomamos la decisión de esperar hasta que regresáramos a los EE.UU./ hasta que hubiéramos regresado a los EE.UU. Necesitamos usar el subjuntivo porque, aunque el verbo principal es pasado, la acción dependiente se presenta como futura de esta acción principal.

(Hello Dave, I am enjoying these “hot days” even though we are surrounded by snow. Here are the answers to your questions:

1. It was more productive to live in my thirties than it was in my twenties. We use the preterite because even though it is a habitual action in the past, we see this past as a time already finished, the linkage of years and facts already completed, closed. We use the relative *lo que* because the antecedent is an idea, a concept, an action, something abstract that we cannot catch, touch.

2. I was conscious that my life had more quality.” Here don’t utilize the article *la* between *de* and *que* because *que* is not a relative pronoun but a conjunction that introduces a dependent sentence *que* acts as a complement of the principal verb “to be conscious of.

3. We made the decision to work until we returned to the US, until that we had returned to the US. We need to use the subjunctive because, even though the principal verb is in the past tense, the dependent action presents itself as the future of this principal action.)

Spanish diary entry 9: Email interchange with Carmen Valentin

February 25, 00 *Intercambio de email con Carmen Valentin*

*Buenas Carmen: Muchas gracias por la explicación de la gramática, lo que es muy valioso para mí. Voy a enviarle este mensaje y prometo que no voy a molestarle de nuevo. (hasta la semana que viene). Me gustaría escuchar alguna información sobre mis compañeros en la clase (nombre, pueblo natal, cursos de estudio, objetivos, experiencia previa en español, etc.) ¿Qué piensa? Espero que ud vaya enseñar 401, la composición. Pienso seguir adelante escribiendo una tesis en español en 4 – 5 años. Gracias por su paciencia . . . hasta el Martes. . DA PD: Leí el verbo ‘testear’ en un libro de Argentina?*

(David: (Carmen: Thank you for the explanation of the grammar which is very valuable to me. I am going to send you this message and I promise that I am not going to bother you any more. . . until next week. . I would like to hear some information about my classmates in the class (name, place of birth, course of study, objectives, previous experience in Spanish, etc. I hope that you teach 401. I plan to go ahead and write a thesis in Spanish in 4-5 years. Thanks for your patience. See you Tuesday in class. DA  
PS: I read the verb *testear* in a book from Argentina?)

*Carmen: (La Respuesta) Tranquilo, Dave, prometo responder todos los mensajes que me envíe sobre la lengua española, no importa la cantidad. Yo no conocía el verbo ‘testear’ ni tampoco lo he encontrado en el diccionario, puede ser un dialectalismo o regionalismo de una zona argentina. Es buena idea que los estudiantes se presenten un poco, si que lo podemos hacer ahora, cuando cada uno presente la historia política. Anímo con la*

*clase, creo que está haciendo un excelente trabajo y su escritura, para no haber tomado nunca una clase de composición, es muy buena. Que pase un buen fin de semana. Carmen.*

(Carmen: (Dave, Don't worry, I am willing to respond to all your messages re: Spanish regardless of the number. I am not acquainted with the verb *testear*". It could be local or regional dialect in a part of Argentina. It is a good idea for students to tell a little about themselves, maybe when each student presents his political history. Keep going in the class, I think you are doing excellent work and your writing, for never having taken a class in composition, is very good. Have a good week end. C.)

Comment and Analysis: The exchange of emails between the adult student, David, and his professor in advanced conversation, Carmen, shows the student's interest in learning some of the more complex grammatical structures in Spanish and the willingness of the teacher to respond to grammatical questions posed by the student. Not only does the teacher respond, she gives a clear and thorough explanation. The focus here is the subject of teacher-student communication, which demonstrates the student's motivation to learn and also his ability to use the professional resources available to him in his immediate environment, in this case, a graduate class in Spanish with a highly qualified teacher. Another facet of this entry is the feedback that Carmen, the teacher, gives David, the language learner, on his progress in the class and in the writing of the Spanish language. This type of communication on language study between student and teacher started in January 2000 and continues on a weekly basis today, which gives David access to an expert in Spanish and provides Carmen, who teaches American undergraduates, insight into the learning style and motivation of an adult student.

Spanish diary entry 11:

November 9, 2000

*El diário*

*Cecilia y yo nos encontramos en la biblioteca de ISU para seguir adelante con el programa de estudio. Creo que estoy progresando bien en L2 y este semestre estoy tomando una asignatura española de ISU llamada “La composición avanzada”. Tal asignatura me da otra perspectiva de la lengua y también me proporciona la ocasión de enterarme de nuevo vocabulario y nuevas construcciones de la gramática. Creo que el estudio formal en la universidad también me da feedback respecto a mi progreso relativo a otros que están estudiando español.*

(Cecilia and I met today in the ISU Library to continue on with the program of study. I believe that I am progressing well in L2 and this semester I am taking a course at ISU called Advanced Spanish Composition. Such a course gives me another perspective on the language and provides me exposure to new vocabulary and grammatical constructions. I believe that the formal study also gives me feedback on my progress relative to others in the class that want to learn the Spanish language.)

#### Comment and Analysis

The following interlanguage was noted by the tutor with her corrections in parenthesis: *respetar* (*respetar*: to respect), *el respecto* (*el respeto*: the respect, noun), *valorar esta oportunidad o apreciar esta oportunidad* (to value this opportunity o to appreciate this opportunity), *el boleto* (the ticket), *avergonzar* (to embarrass), *caballos* (pronunciation: horses), *emergir a Australia* (*emigrar a Australia*: emigrate to Australia), *la destinación* (*el destino*: the destination), and *porque lo rechazó y lo trató más como un*



*espectáculo que como héroe* (because he rejected him and tried to make him more of a spectacle than a hero: complex clause).

Spanish diary entry 12:

January 7, 2001

*El diário*

*Sigo adelante con las sesiones de estudio con Cecilia y durante las vacaciones de Navidad he tenido la oportunidad de estudiar con Clare, la hermana menor de Cecilia que está aquí en Ames para visitar a Cecilia y Marcos. Cecilia está muy ocupada durante esta época con sus propios estudios y Clare, una argentina de 18 años, está trabajando como tutora en lugar de Cecilia. Me doy cuenta de que me he adaptado al acento de Cecilia y ahora inmediatamente noto un acento argentino más pronunciado hablado por Clare, en particular al pronunciar las palabras de la doble “l”, por ejemplo, silla, calle, caballo, ella, etc. Disfruto la ocasión de conocer a Clare y tener la experiencia de estudiar con otra hablante de español, lo que me ayuda a aplicar y probar mis habilidades en una situación nueva. (Siempre tengo que considerar la ortografía del verbo disfrutar que es disfrutar en portugués. Puedo recordar la distinción entre “lengua” (español) y “lingua” (portugués) debido que la segunda letra de la ortografía en español es “e” como la “e” en “lengua” y la “e” en “español”, pero lo contrario se aplica a “disfrutar”).*

(I continue with the sessions with Cecilia and during this Christmas vacation have had the opportunity to study with Clare, Cecilia’s younger sister from Argentina who is in Ames to visit Cecilia and Marcos. Cecilia is very busy with her own studies at this time and Clare, who is eighteen, is doing the tutoring in her place. I realize through this experience with Clare that I have adapted to Cecilia’s accent and immediately I noticed a difference as

Clare's accent is more pronounced especially in the "double L words" like *silla*, *calle*, *caballo*, *ella*, etc. I enjoy the chance to meet Clare and to study with another Spanish speaker to test and apply my abilities to a new situation. I always have to think twice about the spelling of *disfrutar* (Spanish) and *desfrutar* (Portuguese). With *lengua* (Spanish) and *lingua* (Portuguese), I associate the "e" in *lengua* with the "e" in *español*, but the opposite applies with *disfrutar* and *desfrutar*.)

Comment and Analysis: This diary entry is a report on the continuing efforts of the learner to progress with his spoken and written Spanish through study sessions with native speakers. He is experiencing at this time extensive work with a tutor from Argentina and thus is learning the speech patterns and accent of the Spanish spoken in that country. His writing is becoming relatively error free, moving him from category of *learner* to *user* of the language, at least the written language.

Spanish diary entry 13:

October 18, 2001

*El diário*

*Manajé mi coche hoy a Grinnell para estudiar con Carmen en su oficina. Ella está muy ocupada debido a su horario de enseñar en Grinnell College y también debido a su hijo infante, Sergio, por lo tanto, agradezco la ocasión de conversar con ella. Hoy conversamos 45 minutos en español y 45 minutos en inglés. Carmen es una profesora (profesional) y sabe muy bien las reglas de la gramática española, siempre escucho cuidadosamente cuando ella habla. Mi meta hoy era concentrarme en la fluidez.*

(I drove my car today to Grinnell to study with Carmen in her office at the college. She is very busy due to her teaching schedule and also due to the presence of her infant son,

Sergio, therefore I appreciate the chance to speak with her. Today, we conversed forty-five minutes in Spanish and forty-five minutes in English. Carmen is a professional and knows the rules of Spanish grammar very well, I always listen carefully when she speaks. My objective today was concentrating on fluency.)

Comment and Analysis: Interlanguage noted in conversation: *averiguar* (to find out), *buscar* (to seek), *saber* (to know, to find out); *aguantar, tolerar, soportar* (to tolerate); *durante los años setenta* (during the seventies); *ha habido ejemplos de terrorismo* (have had examples of terrorism); *ella sonríe* (she smiles); *algo muy controvertido* (something very controversial); *el marino se había querellado contra García Márquez*. (the sailor had taken legal action against G.M.).

Spanish diary entry 14:

February 13, 2002

*El diario*

*Conocí a una alumna en mi clase de ESL, Ingrid de Colombia, y sugerí que estudiáramos juntos de vez en cuando. Ella estaba de acuerdo y hemos tenido nuestra primera sesión de estudio en la biblioteca de Urbandale. Ingrid es una buena alumna de inglés y se graduó de la universidad de Colombia con un título como ingeniería. Ella se trasladó con su marido y hijo desde Bogotá hasta Des Moines para que el marido trabajara como ingeniero con una empresa internacional de construcción cuya sede está aquí. Ingrid me informó de que ellos anticiparan un cambio de residencia, pero voy a aprovechar su presencia aquí ahora para seguir adelante con el español. La sesión fue buena.*

(I met a student in my ESL (class I teach), Ingrid from Colombia, and I suggested that we study together once in a while. She agreed and we have had our first study session in

the Urbandale Library. Ingrid is a good English student and graduated from a university in Colombia with a degree in engineering. She moved with her husband and son from Colombia to Des Moines for her husband to work as an engineer with an international construction company whose headquarters are here. Ingrid informed me that they anticipated a change of residence in a short time, but I am going to take advantage of her presence here now to continue with my study of Spanish. The lesson went well and we followed the established routine of study. She adapted rapidly.

### Comment and Analysis

The subject has begun lessons with a new tutor, Ingrid, and seems impressed with her abilities. They follow the normal study routine and David reports that Ingrid picked up the procedure rapidly. Interlanguage punctuated with the use of the subjunctive mood noted by the tutor and discussed in the session is as follows: *gemelos* (pronunciation: twins), *ataque cardíaco* (*ataque del corazón*: heart attack), *voy a contar una historia* (*voy a contarle una historia*: I am going to tell you a story), *mostró respecta a Paul* (*mostró respeto a Paul*: showed respect to Paul), *él estaba hablando muy coloquial* (*él estaba hablando muy coloquialmente*: he was speaking very colloquially (adverb) y *cuando los gemelos son adultos* (*cuando los gemelos sean adultos*: when the twins are adults- (subjunctive).

Spanish diary entry 15:

September 17, 2002

*El diario*

*La tutora, Ingrid, de los meses pasados se trasladó a la Ciudad de México debido al trabajo de su marido. Clemen, otra colombiana y otra alumna de mi clase de inglés, ha participado en sesiones de estudio conmigo de vez en cuando esta año. Ella, como Ingrid,*

*se graduó en la universidad de Colombia como ingeniera y está aquí en DM sola, pero Clemen tiene una hermana en Minneapolis y una amiga, Ruby, en Miami. Ella ya sabe la rutina de estudio porque ha participado anteriormente en el proceso. Creo que tengo suerte de poder estudiar con varias tutoras de varios países españoles porque tengo ocasión de adaptarme a las diferencias en expresión y en el sonido del acento. También entre las sesiones con las tutoras estoy concentrándome al repasar y organizar las notas acumuladas de las clases previas.*

(The tutor, Ingrid, of the past months moved to Mexico City due to her husband's work. Clemen, another Colombian and also another student of my English class, has participated in study sessions with me from time to time this year. She, like Ingrid, graduated from a Colombian university as an engineer and is here in DM alone, but Clemen has a sister in Minneapolis and a friend, Ruby, in Miami. She already knows the study routine because she has participated previously in the process. I believe that I am lucky to be able to study with various tutors from different Spanish speaking countries because it gave me the opportunity to adapt to different expressions and to the sound of different accents. Also, between the tutoring sessions I am concentrating on reviewing and organizing the notes accumulated from previous sessions.)

#### Comment and Analysis

The subject, David, is now working with Clemen, a Colombian educated as an engineer and living in Des Moines. He mentions that in addition to work with the native-speaker tutors, between classes he is reviewing and organizing the notes from previous sessions. Furthermore on the topic of the native-speaker tutoring system in place, David emphasizes that this is an important feature of his self-styled program of learning Spanish

because of the necessity to adapt to different accents and also to learn unique expressions, peculiar to particular Spanish speaking countries.

Interlanguage from this lesson follows with correction within parenthesis: *nunca sabe* (*nunca se sabe*: you or one never knows), *conocerla y su familia* (*conocerla y a su familia*: to meet her and her family, use of “personal a”), *correo* (pronunciation: roll r), *una químico* (*un químico*: agreement of gender between adjective and noun), *la romance* (*el romance*: agreement of gender), *gemelos* (pronunciation: twins), *falleció* (pronunciation: died), *regreso* (pronunciation: return), *respecta* (*respeta*: respect) and *las oportunidades* (pronunciation: the opportunities).

Spanish dairy entry 16:

August 13, 2003

*El diário*

*Encontré a Clemen a la biblioteca de la Universidad de Drake para estudiar la lección española. Hoy en día estamos concentrándonos en la fluidez y la pronunciación. No quiero que la tutora se adapte a la pronunciación incorrecta de una palabra porque yo siempre le repita lo mismo, incorrecto. También, estoy tratando de usar el subjuntivo más y más en todos los tiempos. Todavía tengo un problema con la pronunciación de “él” debido a la semejanza a “ele” en portugués y la tutora hace corrección trás corrección. Las correcciones de la interlengua: se lastimó, una tesis, a veces, no as vezes, el paraíso, contribuyo, luchando uno contra el otro.*

(I met Clemen at the Drake Library to study the Spanish lesson. These days we are concentrating on fluency and pronunciation. I don't want the tutor to adapt to my incorrect pronunciation of a word and accept it as correct because I always pronuounce it the same.

Also, I am trying to use the subjunctive more and more in all tenses. I have still have problem with the pronunciation of “él” due to the similarity with the Portuguese “ele”, translate as “he” but are pronounced differently. The Spanish is always crisp and the Portuguese “slushy”.

Comment and Analysis: The subject reports that the session went well and it was necessary that he make a conscious effort to eliminate hesitation and fillers, both which were interfering with his fluency. He is aware that the tutor could fall into the trap of adapting to his quirks or blatant errors in pronunciation and he wants to be sure that doesn’t happen. He mentions his effort to use the subjunctive more in all tenses and also the Portuguese interlanguage still makes its present felt on occasion.

Further interlanguage corrections from this lesson include the following: incorrect: *el povo* (*el pueblo*: the people, corrected from the Portuguese word, *povo*), incorrect: *un programa de enseñanza* (correction: *un programa de enseñar*: a program of teaching), incorrect: *una caos* (correction: *un caos*: agreement and pronunciation) and incorrect pronunciation: *él* and *yo* (correct pronunciation: make clear distinction between two).

## Direct Measures

### OPI

In the summer of 2002, the subject took advantage of an opportunity to participate in Spanish language proficiency testing through the ACTFL-Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) administered at Iowa State University on July 3, 2002. It was the opinion of Eduardo, the native-speaker examiner, in an written, but unofficial report that the subject was speaking at

the advanced mid-level of the OPI. See OPI criteria in Appendix A.. The report stated the following:

- You are able to successfully participate as a full conversational partner, initiating exchanges as well as responding.
- You sustain and conclude a social interaction or a conversation involving a transactional situation with a complication.
- You narrate and describe in major time frames.

However, there are some areas in which a linguistic breakdown was noticed. They are as follows:

- Aspect control (i.e. *en el años 74 hubo\* cuatro equipos, Australia es <un nuevo país\*>; podría definir el\* cultura de los EE.UU a través del progreso que <ha sido hecho>.*
- Gender and subject agreement (i.e. *nunca la dejaría solo\* y cuando ella está solo\*, Ella no tiene, ella es limipio\*, ella ha sido entrenado\*, hay hoteles que acepta\* y hay que no acepta\*).*
- Vocabulary (i.e., *EE.UU es capitalística y Australia es socialística, la gente llegó en\* Australia hace 200 años. . . , la relación de las raíces\*, German short hair\*, Raíz\* de Alemania, americano slash\* colombiano.)*
- When asked to perform tasks at the Superior level, you are able to state an opinion; however, you lack the ability to consistently provide a structured argument in extended discourse and resort to narration and description of personal and concrete anecdotes.



### Measuring Spanish Proficiency: Oral L2 Task

A similar evaluation was done in 2003 by Carmen Valentin, a native speaker and Professor of Spanish at Grinnell College, using the ACTFL guidelines. This evaluation showed advanced speaking proficiency, an improvement from the OPI score of a year before. The analysis was done in the form of a task assignment for the subject's graduate Second Language Acquisition (SLA) class in 2003. The results of the task provided more information regarding L2 speaking proficiency. The subject, the Non-Native Speaker (NNS), and the interlocutor, the Native Speaker (NS), each made an assessment on the speaker's L2 language during a recorded session.

Prior to this testing, the following observations were made by the NNS and SLA student: Looking specifically at the learning process for L2 speakers of Spanish, there are certain common grammatical pitfalls which seem to cause problems for all English speakers, beginners and advanced students - *por* and *para*, *estar* and *ser*, relative clauses, the use of the subjunctive and the conjugation and use of reflexive verbs. As the student reaches advanced stages of learning this second language fluency, accuracy and complexity come into play as these criteria, according to Skehan (1989), measure output, that is, how well the speaker actually produces the target language. One of Ohta's ideas regarding collaborative interaction between a native speaker (NS) interlocutor and non-native speaker (NNS) was used as the focus of the assessment: "language acquisition is realized through a collaborative process whereby learners appropriate the language of the interaction as their own, for their own purposes, building grammatical, expressive, and cultural competence through this process (Ohta, 1995).

In an attempt to personalize further the process of SLA and learning, which have been often characterized impersonal and clinical, the interaction in describing and analyzing the output of the 65-year-old subject involves only two participants, assuring a highly personal (human) collaboration and also applying Ohta's idea of the NS (Native Speaker) – NNS (Non-Native Speaker) tandem: . . . “researchers have begun to study both how native speakers or more proficient ‘experts’ support ‘novices’, as well as how L2 learners collaborate with one another as they work on assigned language learning tasks in their L2 classrooms” (Ohta, 1995). The one-on-one interaction was used in this language learning task and is also a technique employed in the OPI.

The following research questions were addressed in this proficiency assessment process involving the NS interlocutor and NNS language learner: (a) How does a non-native speaker's self-assessment of oral proficiency compare to that of a native speaker interlocutor? (b) Do the NNS and NS show compatibility of purpose in performing their roles in the task? (c) At what level of proficiency is the subject speaking? The questions are relevant in that they examine perceptions as viewed by the target language user and the native speaker of that language in regard to the constructs of fluency, accuracy and complexity, criterion suggested by Skehan. They also address Ohta's concerns for personalizing the research process.

The task was an opportunity for the NNS to gain insight into his own progress as a learner of Spanish in the critical areas of fluency, accuracy (of expression) and complexity. Also, both NS and NNS were able to compare their own skills of assessment in evaluating the language employed in the interaction. The focal topic of the task was a one-on-one recorded interview between a NS of Spanish, Dr. Carmen Valentin, Assistant Professor of

Spanish at Grinnell College, and a NNS, David Adkins, the subject of this study. The NS prepared four questions which the NNS did not see prior to the task. These were:

1. *¿Por qué motivos comenzó el estudio de la lengua española?* (Why did you begin the study of Spanish?)
2. *¿Cuáles son sus puntos fuertes y sus puntos débiles en el estudio de la lengua?*  
*¿Piensa que son aplicables a todos los estudiantes de una lengua extranjera? ¿qué son*  
*determinados por la edad? ¿o considera que son propios a usted?* (What are your strong  
 points and weak points in the second language? Do you think that these points are applicable  
 to all students studying a foreign language or that they are determined by your age or do you  
 consider them to be associated with your personality?)
3. *¿Qué beneficios encuentra en el estudio de una lengua extranjera en general y en el*  
*español en particular?* (What are the benefits of the study of a foreign language in general  
 and of Spanish in particular?)
4. *¿Cuáles son sus metas en el aprendizaje de esta lengua?* (What are your goals in the  
 learning of this language?)

The Native Speaker (NS) rated the Non-Native Speaker (NNS) and the NNS rated himself (self-assessment) in the areas of fluency, accuracy and complexity of expression against the criteria provided by ACTFL. It was agreed that the NS not interrupt the NNS unless there was something she was not satisfied with in the response. However, as an advanced learner, the NNS relied on *intrapersonal* interaction more than *interpersonal*. After the twenty-five-minute interview, the NS and NNS continued the task through a discussion and comparison of their notes focused on the three criteria selected. The task was carried out

in the office of the NS at Grinnell College on November 7, 2003. The NNS speaker supplied the tape recorder and other materials. The interaction took place “across the desk” of the NS.

The NNS, who directed the project, communicated by email with the NNS to make arrangements and schedule the task. There was a fair amount of ‘negotiation’ in forming these plans since both parties had full time academic schedules. The entire task was explained by email in advance of the time of the performance of the task including background (introduction), details of method and target language use. The NNS asked the NS to prepare the four central questions of the task discussion in advance of the date of the performance of the recording of the task.

This project was guided by a spirit of collaboration in the interaction between the two participants including back-and-forth communication regarding the general format. Even though the NNS created the project, the NS had the freedom to make any suggestion which she considered appropriate. Few were actually made. The task itself was intended to be, and was, an exercise in spontaneity within a flexible framework of interaction in the target language - questions, responses, comments, negotiations, etc. Spontaneity was one of the important features of the task.

Keying in on the theme of personalizing this task, the two participants had known each other for four years. The Non-Native Speaker was a student of the Native Speaker in the Advanced Spanish Conversation (SP 403) class at Iowa State University in 1999. Since then the two participants have had an ongoing professional dialogue, at least weekly, on the nuances of Spanish and English grammar. In that the two participants in the task had an ongoing working relationship, there was little tension in the interaction during the recording of the task. However, the NNS found himself motivated, concentrating to create correct,

advanced language as the NS has always been a meticulous critic and source of motivation for his progress in speaking and writing Spanish. (Even) as an adult student, there was the added incentive to prove himself to a respected teacher and colleague. Thus, from the point of view of the NNS, there was no lack of interest and motivation. The NS was also interested in the project with the background and experience as a native-speaker language teacher to pick up subtleties in the interaction and to provide appropriate and concise feedback. In the end, both participants enjoyed the project and learned from it.

One of the primary considerations in selecting this project was the motivation of the participants and the task format was justified in the link between interests and philosophy of the NNS and those of Ohta (1995). The OPI advanced mid-level score earned by the subject a year earlier allowed a level of proficiency necessary to make this project spontaneous.

### Results of the L2 Task

The first research question of the task was concerned with a comparison of ratings by the NS and the NNS of the L2 language generated by the subject, the NNS, in the course of the 25-minute interview. Using the ACTFL proficiency guidelines and applying these guidelines to the criteria selected as indicators the level of the NNS's L2 in this interview, the NS/NNS rating scores were as follows:

In the category of Fluency Rating, shown in Table 3, the NS and NSS both gave the subject a score of 5.0, superior in the ACTFL guidelines, in "appropriate vocabulary". In "clarity of expression", the NS yielded a 4.5 and NNS a 4.0, a high advanced and advanced ACTFL rating and in "fluency mean score", the mean score of appropriate vocabulary and

clarity of expression, the NS gave the subject a 4.75 and the NNS a 4.5, both in the high advanced category.

In the Accuracy Rating in the area of “appropriate grammar”, the NS gave the subject a 5.0, a superior ACTFL score, and the NNS awarded a 4.0, an advanced ACTFL mark. In “pronunciation”, the subject was rated a 4.0, advanced, by the NS and also a 4.0 by the NS. The “accuracy mean score”, the mean of appropriate grammar and pronunciation, the NS resulted in 4.5, advanced high, and the NNS gave a 4.0, advanced. These scores are shown in Table 4.

Table 5 illustrates the Complexity of Expression Rating with the NS awarding the subject a 5.0, superior, and the NNS a 5.0, also, in “use of the subjunctive.” Both NS and NNS gave the subject a 5.0, the superior rating, in “use of relative clauses” and the “complexity of mean score, the average of the use of the subjunctive and the use of relative clauses, showed a 5.0 from the NS and a 5.0 from the NNS.

The comparison of the ratings of the subject, the NNS, by the NS and the NNS showed a close agreement in perception of the language generated in the testing. See below.

**Table 3:**

**Fluency Rating in the L2 Task**

Measures	Native Speaker Score	Non-Native Speaker Score
Appropriate vocabulary	5.0	5.0
Clarity of expression	4.5	4.0
Fluency Mean Score	4.75	4.5

( continued)

**Table 4:**

**Accuracy Rating in the L2 Task**

Measures	Native Speaker Score	Non-Native Speaker Score
Appropriate grammar	5.0	4.0
Pronunciation	4.0	4.0
Accuracy Mean Score	4.5	4.0

**Table : 5**

**Complexity of Expression Rating in the L2 Task**

Measures	Native Speaker Score	Non-Native Speaker Score
Use of subjunctive	5.0	5.0
Use of relative clauses	5.0	5.0
Complexity Mean Score	5.0	5.0

Table 3 Summary: The NS rated fluency at 4.75, slightly higher than the self-assessment of the NNS at 4.5 Table 4 Summary: The NS rated the L2 slightly higher in the area of accuracy than the NNS. Table 5 Summary: The NNS and NS were in agreement.

The Universal Mean in the L2 Task is the mean of the Fluency Rating, which includes appropriate vocabulary and clarity of expression; the Accuracy Rating, appropriate grammar and pronunciation; and, the Complexity of Expression Rating, use of the subjunctive and use of relative clauses –the mean of the three mean scores from criteria above, showed 4.75 from the NS and 4.50 from the NNS. These scores are shown in Table 6 below. Summary: NS-NNS: 5-superior 4-advanced 3 intermediate 2-novice.

**Table 6:****The Universal Mean in L2 Task**

	<b>Native Speaker (NS)</b>	<b>Non-Native Speaker (NNS)</b>
Fluency:	<i>Mean Score</i> 4.75	4.5
a. Appropriate vocabulary	5	5
b. Clarity of expression	4.5	4
Accuracy:	<i>Mean Score</i> 4.5	4.0
a.Appropriate grammar	5	4
b.Pronunciation	4	4
Complexity of Expression:	<i>Mean Score</i> 5.0	5.0
a.Use of Subjunctive	5	5
b. Use of Relative Clauses	5	5
<b>Universal Mean Score</b>	<b>NS: 4.75</b>	<b>NNS: 4.50</b>

Following the L2 Task, the NS and NNS participated in a closing dialogue in which they discussed their impression of the language noted by each. The text of this dialogue is as follows:

NNS: *En general, me encuentro satisfecho con la entrevista. Creo que no hablé con fluidez en los primeros 2 o 3 minutos del diálogo.* (In general, I am satisfied with the



interview. I believe that I did not speak with maximum fluency in the first two or three minutes of the dialogue.)

NS: *Estoy de acuerdo. Anoté vacilaciones en el principio, pero se adaptó bien después. Escuché el portugués interrumpiendo las palabras españolas.* (I agree. I made note of hesitation at the start, but you adapted well after. I heard some Portuguese interfering with the Spanish words. )

NNS: *Sí. La aula que estoy tomando en la U. of Iowa exige bastante tiempo este semestre al escribir y hablar la lengua portuguesa, por lo tanto el portugués siempre está presente en mi mente. En 4 semanas, habré acabado mi última aula de portugués por un rato y entonces planeo concentrarme en español exclusivamente. Notó usted equivocaciones consistentes, ellas de una clase específica? Yo no estaba consciente de una clase de error que cometí con consistencia.* (Yes. The Portuguese class I am taking at Iowa demands much time this semester in writing and speaking that language. In four weeks I will have finished my last Portuguese class for a while and then plan to concentrate on Spanish exclusively. Did you notice consistent errors of one particular type? I was not aware of a particular type of error which I made with consistency.)

NS: *No. No hubo esta clase de error ni en la pronunciación ni en la gramática. Anoté una equivocación en la pronunciación de la palabra - recursos. Usted dijo: "Hay más recursos disponibles aquí en español que en portugués." Pero la pronunció: ricursos. Como si estuviera diciendo la letra "e" en inglés.* (No, there was no particular type of error in pronunciation or in the grammar. I did make note of an error in pronouncing *recursos*. You said: "There are more resources (*recursos*) available here in Spanish than in Portuguese. But

you pronounced it *ricursos* (like a long *e* in English) rather than *recursos* (short *e* as in “*ë*” of red in in English.”)

NNS: *Gracias. Me encuentro cometiendo lo mismo (error) cuando digo regresar. Tengo que acordarme – raygreso - ray, ray, ray, no ri, ri, ri. Verdad?* (Thanks. I find myself committing the same error when I say *regresar*. I have to remember – ray, ray, ray, not ri, ri, ri. True?)

NS: *Verdad. Tenga que decir recursos, regresar, no ricursos, no rigresar. Otra anotación es una de la concordancia – dijo: “ellos son más joven, en vez de jóvenes. . .” También puso el alegre en lugar de la alegría. Dijo: Aprender una segunda lengua bien es una fuente de el alegre. De la alegría es correcta. Alegría es el sustantivo y alegre el adjetivo.* (True. You have to say *recursos, regresar, no ricursos, rigresar*. Another notation is one of agreement between noun and adjective. You said: “they are younger. . .” and put the adjective in singular form which did not agree with the subject of the sentence which is plural. Also you put the adjective form of joy instead of the noun. Learning a second language well is a source of joy (noun).

NNS: *Gracias otra vez. Como hemos discutido antes, a esta etapa de mi estudio de español, tengo que concentrarme en los detalles, por ejemplo, las cosas pequeñas e las cosas sutiles en la pronunciación. ¿Qué piensa?*

NS: *Para auto-correr su discurso cotiadiano, por ejemplo, en el uso de recursos, simplemente necesita praticarla. La repetición de la forma correcta es la clave.* (To self-correct your daily speech, for example, in the use of *recursos*, you simply need to practice it. Repetition of the correct form is the key.)

NNS: *Usted tiene una reputation entre los alumnos como una profesora exigente. Estoy de acuerdo, y agradezco esta única característica profesional. Gracias, Señora. He aprendido mucho hoy. Mucho gusto.* (You have a reputation among the students as a demanding teacher. I agree, and I appreciate this unique professional characteristic. Thank you. I have learned much today. It was a pleasure.)

NS: *Una profesora exigente ¿Verdad? Yo no lo sabía. De nada. Disfruté del proyecto también. Igualmente.* (A demanding teacher. Really? I didn't know. ..Don't mention it. I enjoyed the project also. My pleasure also.) Etc., etc., etc. (The conversation ended).

The negotiation in this language task was “give and take” with the NNS speaking at his level level in the L2. The NS, aware of his level and of needs as a student, and emphasized the details and some of the subtleties of the language. This does not mean to imply that the NNS was speaking at the level of a near NS; he was not. His language was advanced NNS. The interlanguage in the interview was of a nature that it did not hinder comprehension, but the purpose of the task was to identify language generated, evaluate it and then compare the evaluations of NS and NNS. The NS could have ignored small mistakes, but did not, as expectations of the learner were high regarding progress in the Spanish language and the NS, through previous association, knew of these expectations and reinforced them in the nature of the questions posed in the interview. The NS made fifteen notations of interlanguage on the part of the NNS in the twenty-five-minute interview. The errors noted were of the following categories: agreement of noun and adjective, phonetic: pronunciation, verb tense, hesitation in fluency and use of gerund instead of infinitive:

The mutual awareness of the NS and NNS in regard to the objectives of the task were answered as follows: How does a non-native speaker's self-assessment of oral proficiency compare to that of a native speaker interlocutor? The results show that the NS and NNS were consistent and in virtual agreement, slight differences notwithstanding, in their assessment of the performances of the task; Do the NS and NNS show compatability in the performance of their role in the task? Yes, the mutual awareness of emphasizing the details of the language generated was the characteristic of this compatability. Both were on the 'same page' throughout the task and the interaction showed positive chemistry between the participants.

#### Summary and Conclusion of the L2 Task

In listening to the twenty-five-minute interview between the Native Speaker (NS) and the Non-Native Speaker (NNS), the task appeared to be productive for both participants. In addition to the feedback and discussion on the evaluation process and the language spoken, NS intonation served to pique interest of the NNS with efforts to be made in this area in future study of the Spanish language. In discussing intonation, the NNS said that he never considered "sounding like an native speaker" nearly as important as speaking with clarity and correctness in his own style." He mentioned further that a NNS can speak with clarity of thought and correctly with an accent from L1. That is, he can be perfectly understood and speak at an advanced level with the presence of an accent. However, as daily progress in the language is a goal of the NNS, noting the NS intonation was an unexpected, yet positive outcome of the task. Regarding actual output of words, several samples were taken in the course of the recording and it showed that the NNS was speaking an average of 50 to 55 words per minute in L2 and the NS about 85 to 90 words per minute. There was a non-stop question-response format and at the end of the interview session and a comprehensive

discussion of the notes taken and ratings of the language generated by the NNS. Also, regarding the personal aspect of the task interaction, there was a reasonably relaxed interview atmosphere. On one occasion, in posing question #2, which has several parts, the NNS commented before responding: *Por favor, señora, no puedo seguir aquella pregunta lo que es típica española – larga y compleja. Por favor, hágala parte por parte.* (“Please, señora, I cannot follow that question which is typically Spanish – long and involved – how you expect me to remember all of that question. Let’s take it piece by piece.”).

American students are taught that it is important in writing to be concise and use short, focused sentences, while Spanish and Portuguese writers demonstrate the opposite tendency – the longer and more complex, the better. José Saramago, the 1998 Portuguese Nobel Prize winning writer, used “sentences” of one page in length in some of his books and “paragraphs” of several pages, while the American writer, Hemingway, also a Nobel Prize winner, used a very simplistic style with eight to ten word sentences or less in many cases. In the past, when the NS had asked the NSS to edit certain correspondences which she has written in English, the first priority in the editing was usually the shortening of sentences.

It seems that good techniques for language learning and evaluation were demonstrated in this task backed by a similar approach employed by the ACTFL-OPI in their language evaluation work. The NNS had developed his own logical one-on-one tutorial style with native speakers years before he was acquainted with the OPI, but without the specific rating criteria contributed by the ACTFL. Once a second language learner has learned the fundamentals of a language – a working vocabulary, the use of present and past tenses and basic grammar – he needs to work on putting those parts together and that can be done most effectively through the practice of writing L2 followed by speaking. Writing is essential for

someone serious about learning a language, as writing gives the learner the ability to visualize grammatical constructions. (Speaking probes the mind, writing the soul). Reading of L2 plays an important part also at this stage as the learner can see (visualize) words, verbs and grammar in action. The reading reinforces the learning process.

Only through actually speaking with feedback from an advanced, or preferably, native speaker can the learner progress. The one qualification in the learner's taking full advantage of the advanced abilities of his teacher, or tutor, is that the learner himself must be in the intermediate to low advanced category of L2. The learner *cannot* improve fluency *until* he has built a solid repertoire of vocabulary (building blocks), verbs (the action) and grammar (the meaning). A beginner cannot practice his tennis effectively until he has learned the fundamentals of grip, stance and basic strokes; likewise the speaker cannot practice fluency without first establishing a working foundation in words, verbs and grammar. David, the subject of this study, noted that in a linguistics class at Iowa State University, the professor told his class that studies showed that it is not beneficial for NNS to study with native speakers, then added that other studies showed that teacher corrections in ESL were of little value to the learner. An elementary teacher in the class was disbelieving and questioned the statement about the teacher corrections, while the professor reaffirmed his point.

Although the professor may have been able to cite research to back his statements regarding native speaker teachers and teacher corrections, these assertions reject the very premise on which the ACTFL-OPI system has been constructed and are in direct conflict with a system in which the subject of this study used and found to be very effective in L2 study. Personal experience backed by research, Ohta (1995) for example, has taught the

subject that the opposite of the professor's assertions, is true. That is, native speaker teachers are critical for serious students desiring to become authentically fluent. Where else does one learn intonation, rhythm and cadence in addition to idiomatic expressions? For example the present task for the SLA class has been instrumental in demonstrating the effectiveness of NS intonation in Spanish language conversation. However, it does make sense, that in an elementary level class, speaking in L2 only from the beginning sometimes does do more to confuse, than to teach, beginning students who lack the vocabulary and knowledge of the L2 grammar to grasp what the teacher is saying; yet, there are schools where native speaker teachers insist on this approach. It would seem more effective with novice Spanish speakers to add L2 incrementally rather than force the new language on them. (There seems to be, surprisingly, very little research regarding L2 vs. L1 as a teaching method in a classroom situation, according to Mark Warford, Buffalo State University. Warford is writing on this very topic in his Action Research Project for the Iowa State University National Foreign Language Research Summer Seminar.)

In summary, the steps in the task were as follows: 1) interview between NS and advanced NNS; 2) negotiation from time to time during dialogue, but NNS relied more on self-correction and intra-personal than inter-personal resources; 3) comparison of notes and evaluations; 4) discussion of errors noted by both parties; 5) Continuing discussion of the learning process in general; and 6) write-up of the task by the NNS. A key in the success of the project was the background and ability of the NS as a Spanish teacher and the motivation and the advanced proficiency level of the NNS. In addition, the chemistry between the two participants gave the task an added positive dimension.

## Indirect Measures

Evaluative Report from Dr. Carmen Valentin

Carmen Valentin, NS professor of Spanish from Valladolid, Spain, who tutored the subject and also taught him in a graduate class at Iowa State, wrote the following subjective report on his progress in L2 proficiency:

I met D. Adkins in December of 1999 when he was introduced to me by another ISU faculty member. He wanted to discuss Spanish 403, advanced Spanish conversation, and he asked several questions about the class which was being offered in the spring of 2000. He took 403 and although he had never taken a formal class in Spanish, his Spanish improved progressively. He had previously studied Portuguese and he did not pronounce Spanish vowels clearly, in fact, it was difficult for me to understand his Spanish in the first month of the class because of the influence of Portuguese.

I participated in a language task with the subject in November of 2003 in which we carried on a taped dialogue and one in which I assessed his language that day and he did self-reporting on the same using a version of the OPI. He spoke at an advanced to superior level in fluency, accuracy of expression and complexity of expression for a non-native speaker. I noted that at the start of the twenty-five-minute interview, he was somewhat hesitant, but after the first five minutes, his fluency improved. He used complex constructions, such as the subjunctive in different tenses. At times, in such a construction, interlanguage in the form of non-agreement in gender between noun and adjective was evident. He seems determined also to improve his intonation, which is difficult for a non-native speaker to achieve. His Spanish speaking has improved from low-intermediate, according to ACTFL-OPI criteria, which he demonstrated in January and February of 2000 to advanced to superior for a non-native speaker in November of 2003. He also writes Spanish at a similar level to his speaking.

*Dr. Carmen Valentin, Assistant Professor of Spanish Grinnell College, 2003*

Anecdotal Report of NS Tutor, Cecilia Benitz, on L2 Progress

Cecilia Benitez, NS from Buenos Aires, Argentina, tutored the subject for two years, 1999-2001, while she was earning her M.B.A. at Iowa State University. She was asked by the



subject to write a short report on her impressions of her experiences as a tutor in the program of *La escuela doméstica* (the home school) including dates and location of participation, description of a study session and her impression of the subject's progress in L2 during her participation as tutor. She is currently employed as an MIS Analyst and works projects for Kimberly-Clark in Latin America. The following report was written by Cecilia Benitez in January 2004.

*Nuestra primera clase de español se realizó en la biblioteca de Urbandale en abril de 1999. El lugar de encuentro fue variando a lo largo de los dos años que estudiamos español juntos. En realidad, principalmente se sumaron otras dos bibliotecas, la de Drake University y la de Iowa State University.*

*Lo primero que me llamó la atención durante la primer clase fue lo bien que David hablaba "portuñol", una mezcla de español y portugués. Esto se debía a que en esa época él había estado estudiando más portugués que español. Esto fue corriéndose notoriamente a lo largo de las sesiones.*

*En general, nuestras clases consistían de conversaciones y, en base a estas conversaciones, aprendía nuevo vocabulario, gramática y pronunciación. También, a la mayoría de las clases, David traía una monografía sobre la que trabajábamos corrigiendo la gramática.*

*Durante estos dos años de estudio de la lengua española, he visto un gran progreso en la comprensión, la escritura y los diálogos de David. Realmente considero que su extraordinario avance es el fruto de la dedicación y el esmero que David ha puesto en aprender esta maravillosa lengua.*

(Our first Spanish class was held in the Urbandale Library in April of 1999. The meeting place varied during the two years that we studied together. In reality, we used two other libraries also, the one at Drake University and the one at Iowa State.

The first thing that I noticed during the first class was that David was speaking "Portunhol", a mixture of Spanish and Portuguese. This was due to the fact that at this time he was studying more Portuguese than Spanish. This had to be corrected during the study sessions.

In general, our classes consisted of conversations and from these he was learning new vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. Also, the majority of the classes David carried on a monologue from which we corrected the grammar.

During these two years of study of the Spanish language, I have seen great progress in the comprehension, the writing and in the dialogues with David. Really I consider his extraordinary improvement to be the fruit of his dedication and great value that David has placed in learning this marvelous language.)

*Cecilia Benitez, M.B.A., Iowa State University, 2001*

#### Summary of Self-Assessment by Subject

The subject, David, did a self-critique in regard to his views on his current L2 proficiency (2004) and comments as follows:

I am pleased, but not satisfied, with my progress in reading, writing, speaking and understanding Spanish conversation. My experience with Portuguese gave me some advantage initially in that I started the study of Spanish with insight into some of the language fundamentals, such as the use of *por* and *para*, *estar* and *ser*, reflexive verbs, the present and past subjunctive and the distinction between the preterite and the imperfect tenses. I believe that the Portuguese background “jump started” my understanding of Spanish and allowed me to move more expediently in the early stages of study, but the Portuguese background also frequently penalized it, as I mixed the two languages when I was studying both simultaneously back in 1997. It was as if I were searching for a word (in my head) in Spanish conversation and I would instead call up a Portuguese word. Today in 2004, the confusion persists in much lesser degree, but it is not a major obstacle to fluency. However, when I am reading a book in Portuguese, for example, The Crime of Father Amaro, (*O Crime de Padre Amaro*) by Eça de Queirós, knowledge of Spanish vocabulary is an asset, not an obstacle. In general, I have gained much more from the Portuguese background in the study of Spanish than I have lost. I believe that fluency in both languages gives me greater potential range in what I may be able to do in the future with the two languages, assuming I continue with my present enthusiasm for this type of task.

I am at a point now in my Spanish in 2004 where I am concentrating on details, especially in pronunciation and in comprehension of rapid-fire, colloquial conversation. I am now working with Claret, a Venezuelan, on a weekly basis and keep weekly contact with Carmen Valentin, who I consider my mentor in the study of Spanish. I am always reading a book written in Spanish. Meeting and sharing ideas with Robert Ampuero, a well-known Chilean fiction writer and a classmate in a Portuguese literature class at the University of Iowa in 2003, has provided a personal touch to my Spanish language reading program. I am never “there”, I am always striving to overcome another L2 obstacle, or the same one over and over.

I have now conscientiously studied Spanish for over 6 years and I believe that if I continue my current and past level of interest, I will continue to progress. Will that be to native speaker fluency? Researchers in the field of linguistics say that native speakers are born, not made, and that a native speaker’s L1 is the first language he learns. By this definition, I am a native speaker of English and could never be as an adult user of Spanish a native speaker. However, I strive to near-native fluency. I believe that is possible. Will I attain the writing skills of an educated native speaker? Yes, I believe that I am approaching that level at present. Will I reach near native speaker listening comprehension? This is the most difficult task for me in learning Spanish. I would say that I have progressed from novice level of comprehension to advanced level during the learning process. However, I do not consider myself to be at near-native comprehension at present, but I do believe that reaching this level of comprehension is a realistic goal.

## Conclusion

Examination of the data presented in this chapter - the Portuguese and Spanish diary entries, the OPI, the L2 Task and the evaluative statements by the two NS tutors – has provided insight regarding the progress of the subject in the study of Portuguese and Spanish. This data also provides the foundation for addressing the assumptions stated by the investigator on page 22.

## CHAPTER IV

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

#### Non-Language Factors in Second Language Learning

In this section, I will consider the impact of non-language factors on the SLA process as evidenced in this case study. These factors are age, prior knowledge, formal study, motivation, culture, and interaction with native speakers.

#### Age and Language Learning

The assumption that the age of the subject was not a deterrent was partially supported. The sixty-five-year-old language learner made clear-cut, significant progress during the course of this investigation, which was shown in diary entries in both Portuguese and Spanish. This progress was further supported in the OPI testing in which he was assessed as an advanced intermediate speaker of Spanish in 2002 and an advanced speaker in 2003. Further analysis of the subject's language output was provided by native speaker tutors who confirmed in the form of anecdotal reports the progress made by the adult learner. At the age of fifty-nine, the subject spoke no Spanish at all. Six years later he was writing, as the diary entries show, and speaking, as the two OPI tests and anecdotal reports indicate, at an advanced level.

However, he was below near native proficiency and showed some linguistic breakdown in the OPI testing of 2002 in the area of aspect control, gender and subject-verb agreement. He was not able to maintain consistency in a structured argument in an extended discourse and was rated as a Spanish speaker of the advanced mid-level category. It is not clear if the linguistic breakdown was associated with the age of the subject, 64 at the time of

the OPI testing, or simply a stage of interlanguage demonstrated under the pressure on a recorded interview. Sixteen months later he showed improvement by OPI criteria and was rated in the advanced to superior category in testing which measured fluency (appropriate vocabulary, clarity of expression), accuracy (appropriate grammar, pronunciation) and complexity of expression (use of the subjunctive, use of relative clauses) according to results of an assessment task and also an anecdotal report from a native speaker college professor.

#### Prior Knowledge of Other Languages

There was support of the assumption in the diary entries and from the anecdotal reports that the study of Portuguese did impact the subject's learning of Spanish. Interlanguage was evident in syntax, morphology and phonology. The subject, a native speaker of English, self-reported confusion especially in spoken language in the period in which he was involved in the simultaneous study of Portuguese and Spanish. In the Review of Literature, Pei (1973) would not have been surprised at the subject's dilemma for he had warned that language learners involved in the simultaneous study of these two languages would experience phonetic problems in their work.

In addition to Pei's insight, it would seem that some confusion would be understandable and normal for a language learner (of any age) in that the two languages share a large common vocabulary, yet Portuguese and Spanish are distinct languages in which phonetic and syntactic rules specific to the target language must be followed in order to produce effective output. As previous examples in this study have shown (see page 28), some Spanish verbs and nouns are distinguished from Portuguese cognates by only one letter in

their spelling. However, the subject's previous study of high school Latin and college French was not considered a factor in the learning of Spanish.

#### Formal Classroom Instruction

In addition to his native language tutoring program, the subject took several university graduate level classes in Spanish and Portuguese from 2000 - 2003, during three years of the six-year longitudinal study. As he maintained an "A" grade average and given the advanced level of these language courses, this academic achievement in a formal setting with student work assessed by university teachers is a further indication of the progress he had made since starting the study of Spanish as an adult. The classes gave David an opportunity to test his language skills in a structured setting and also provided additional feedback from qualified instructors, some native speakers and some not. An additional benefit was the subject's exposure to the reading of Spanish and Portuguese literature in two of the classes. The fact that he was successful in this formal classroom setting indicates that the university classes did influence and enhance the student's language learning progress and thus supports the assumption.

#### Motivation vs. Age

Discussions of motivation were prominent throughout the diary entries. Demonstrations of the subject's persistence and disciplined approach to language study year-after-year indicate that motivation was a critical factor in progress made in learning the Spanish language. The subject mentioned that he had not taken full advantage of his opportunity to learn Portuguese while he was living in Lourenço Marques, Mozambique from 1971-1974. He seemed to express disappointment in himself for not having worked harder at Portuguese during this window of opportunity. However, he appeared to use the

Mozambique experience as a source of motivation for success in the opportunities which he had later to study both Portuguese and Spanish. He consistently demonstrated willingness to engage the language, which Gardner (1996) identified as a characteristic of an active learner, in order compensate for the earlier experience and used this past disappointment (in Mozambique) as a driving force for a future endeavor in language learning. Using the critical age theories as a benchmark, which show that maximum opportunity to acquire a second language naturally occurs in childhood, not as an adult; it seems that the assumption is accepted. Motivation, which is seen as a positive force, was more important than age in David's L2 progress, contradicting the literature, which considered advanced age an obstacle to language learning.

### Culture

The experiences of the learner and supporting information from his diary entries seem to support the assumption and to indicate that culture did play a positive part in the subject's language learning plan. Ironically, in an age where high school and college age language students travel frequently to destinations in which their target language is spoken, the subject chose to use exclusively the resources available to study Portuguese and Spanish locally, in central Iowa. In fact, the subject called this favoring of local resources as part of the challenge and a further source of motivation. That is, he was actively seeking input, which Kashen (1983) called the trait of "a good language learner." He seemed to be convinced that he did not need foreign travel in order to progress with his language endeavours. He experienced the Portuguese (Brazilian) and Spanish cultures in Iowa through hundreds of hours of study with native speakers, reading Spanish language and Portuguese literature, taking graduate level language classes, attending Spanish language masses and through

frequent participation in El Grupo, the Spanish speaking Alcoholics Anonymous group in Des Moines.

### Study with a Native Speaker

There seems to be a position taken by some specialists in the field of Second Language Acquisition at major universities that there is no advantage to the learner to study with a NS. There are, of course, many factors involved in this equation including the professional preparation of the teachers who are being evaluated. In support of the NNS teacher, Cook (1999) writes that the language teaching profession would benefit “by paying attention” to the L2 user as teacher rather than give preference to the NS in this role. She sees this approach as an opportunity to provide an L2 model and to better “exploit” the students’ L1. Taking the other side of this discussion, (Ohta, 1995) stated that she sees value in and favors collaborative interaction between a NS interlocutor and a NNS.

David, the subject in the current study, agrees with Ohta and favored Native Speaker tutors in his own learning process because he wanted to go to the source of the language and to a native representative of the culture of that language. He did so without leaving Iowa for Spanish language instruction in studying with tutors from Argentina, Colombia, Cuba, Mexico, Spain and Venezuela. He mentions the advantages of Native Speaker tutoring include direct access to localisms, idiomatic expressions and nuances of the language. Also, the NS is the source of providing a daily demonstration of the native-speaker intonation. Is not “near native speaker” fluency the goal, although difficult to attain, for the serious language learner? What better source than the NS himself? This is not to say that a qualified, well-prepared NNS cannot be an effective teacher of L2. There is also the point of view that the NNS, who is well-prepared as a teaching professional, has experienced the L2



learning process and can better identify with students studying a second language, a point made previously by Cook. However, David emphasized that only through actually speaking with feedback from an advanced L2 speaker or preferably from a native speaker, can the learner progress, especially in the case of an advanced learner.

David reports that he was shocked to hear from a linguistics professor in a university class lecture that feedback was of little value in L2 study. David's own experience has been the opposite. His experience shows that feedback, i.e. corrections of errors (interlanguage), is critical to his progress in L2. Carroll, Swain and Roberge (1992, 173)) question the value of negative feedback, i.e. "No, that's wrong", etc. David concedes that negative feedback presented in a crude and undiplomatic manner could be an obstacle to learning, not an asset. However, he sees a blend of the negative (corrections) with the positive (encouragement) as an effective and necessary practice for L2 adult learning to take place.

The "anti-feedback" position rejects the premise on which the ACTFL-OPI system has been constructed and disagrees with the strategy of a system which the subject employed with positive results in this study. David's personal experience backed by research, Ohta for example, seems to indicate the opposite. Native speakers who provide feedback to the learner are critical and a necessary ingredient in the learning process of serious students desiring to become authentically fluent. For example, the research task involving the NS interlocutor and the NNS language learner described in Chapter III (p.64-69) of this study was instrumental in demonstrating the effectiveness of NS intonation in Spanish language conversation.

### Limitations of the Study

The longitudinal personal case study in which one subject self-reports data over a prolonged period of time is a research approach which makes it impossible to draw conclusions that can be broadly and readily applied to the general population. Results, therefore, need to be interpreted with care, keeping in mind that many factors outside of the focus of this study can influence the process of learning a second language. Gass and Selinker (2001, 30) say that longitudinal studies are normally case studies with researchers collecting data from a small number of subjects, or from a single subject, over an extended period of time. This description would be consistent with the procedures of the present study as the language and experiences of one learner, David, was observed over a protracted period of time, from January 1996 through December 2003. Commenting further, Gass and Selinker (2001, 31) write that attention to the detail of the subject's speech, preferably that of a spontaneous nature, as well as to the role of other participants in the conversations analyzed are also characteristics of the longitudinal case study. This description is also consistent with the events of the present study as creative and spontaneous conversations between David and his native language tutors are noted in detail.

Even though the study is of a longitudinal design with description and analysis of the subject's speech noted over an eight-year period, interpretation of results is somewhat limited from the point of view of empirical research because daily entries are considered qualitative data, rather than quantitative, i.e., empirical, and self-reporting can lend itself to personal bias especially since the investigator and subject are one and the same person. Anecdotal reporting is also considered subjective assessment, even though this form of reporting in the present study was done by second parties well-qualified to comment on the Spanish

language, presumably a more objective method than found in the self-reporting. Quantification of data is not the goal of the longitudinal personal case study, which is the research method employed in this study. Qualitative description and analysis achieved through daily references, language proficiency testing and anecdotal reporting provided the research tools of this study.

Commenting further on the use of qualitative research in educational research, Mills (2003, 4) emphasizes that there is a general acceptance among educators, and especially among action researchers, that the descriptive (qualitative) method effectively captures a picture of what is happening in everyday life. Mills (2003, 78) continues that while the qualitative approach to data collection emphasizes experienced-based events, the quantitative focuses on number-based techniques, but one approach is not necessarily superior to the other. The journal and diary entries employed in the present study are among the data collection techniques cited by Mills as typical in the qualitative approach to research.

### Motivation in Second Language Learning

Since the non-language factor of motivation was a prominent topic in the self-reporting of the learner in this study, further examination of the topic seems appropriate. On one occasion, David cited his commitment to read Spanish books exclusively for a twelve-month period and benefited in terms of increased vocabulary and greater insight into grammatical structures. He also has cited several unique incidents which he identifies as authentic motivators in his language study including an experience in Lisbon, Portugal in 1971 before he spoke any Portuguese or Spanish; the linguistic prowess of Ziad Fazah; the wisdom of a Colombian proverb and excerpts from the life of Moe Berg.

David relates that in September of 1971 he spent two weeks in Lisbon, Portugal securing a work permit and visa for Mozambique, where he had accepted a basketball coaching job with the Academic Association (*Académica*) associated with the University of Lourenço Marques in the African country of Mozambique. To start the immigration process, he was instructed to leave his passport with a police department close to his hotel in downtown Lisbon. When he took the short walk from the hotel to the police station, he was greeted there by a Portuguese police officer who escorted him into a small office presumably for an interview. After looking over the letter of introduction from Mozambique, which David's future employer had provided, the police officer went into a tirade, berating David for not being capable of speaking Portuguese. David reports that this intimidation went on for ten to fifteen minutes before he was escorted out of the office and told to come back in three days. Even though the response in terms to speaking the Portuguese language was delayed a number of years, David says that the experience stayed with him as a lingering memory and grew into a source of discomfort and renewed energy whenever he became discouraged with foreign language study.

David read of Ziad Fazah in the Brazilian weekly magazine, *Veja* (1996, 114), who Gabriel de Lima called "the greatest polygot in the world". Ziad Fazah was a Brazilian who reputedly spoke fifty-eight different languages and whose achievements were mentioned in *The Guinness Books of Records*. Fazah stated in the interview that he was born in Liberia, as a child had moved to Beirut and by the age of seventeen was speaking fifty-four languages (an achievement which would probably startle Chomsky). Despite his linguistic abilities, Fazah claimed he had traveled little outside of Lebanon and Brazil. His mother tongue was Arabic and he learned English and French in school, but insisted that he taught himself all the other

languages. The article reports that *Veja Magazine* of Brazil invited Fazah to visit several foreign consulates in Rio de Janeiro and there he was tested by native speakers of Polish, Greek, Japanese and Finnish. Ewa Kluza, a Polish Consulate employee, expressed surprise at Fazah's abilities in that language. Kluza called Polish a very difficult language to learn, but that Fazah on this occasion spoke very well with a rich vocabulary, yet had never visited Poland. Similar reports were made in the consulate experiment regarding their respective languages and Fazah from native speakers from Greece, Japan and Finland.

David, the subject of the current study, says that "yes", the article describing the abilities of Ziad Fazah provided some encouragement to him. He explains that learning two languages compared to fifty-eight seemed quite reasonable and also noted that Fazah did not visit the countries whose languages he had learned. He (David) comments on his perceptions of foreign language study in general in an essay in *Wapsipinicon Almanac* (Adkins: 1999, 8), a literary journal edited and printed in Anamosa, Iowa, as follows. (See Appendix A, page 106)

Learning a foreign language is much like travel itself; the shadow of the endeavor often exceeds the substance. Perceived as prestigious and glamorous by many, in reality foreign travel and language study both are deceptively hard work. It is, of course, much easier to get on an airplane and ride passively, hour-after-hour, than to tackle actively with all of one's mental, physical and spiritual resources the subjunctive mood or reflexive verbs.

There is a Colombian proverb which states "del dicho al hecho hay mucho trecho", which means there is a big difference between talking about something and actually doing it. David learned of the proverb from Clemen, a Colombian tutor, and saw an opportunity to use the sting of these words as a reminder to him of his goals in language study and that those goals were to actually speak, read and write Portuguese and Spanish at an educated level, not

only to “speak of” or “talk about” speaking, reading and writing them. David (Adkins, 1999: See Appendix A, 106) recalls comments which he heard from time-to-time and which reminded him of the proverb during the course of his language study and writes of them as follows:

A 40-year-old book seller, an avid reader, once said to me offhandedly, ‘Someday I’m going to have to take some time to learn a second language.’ It wasn’t what he said that piqued my interest. It was the cavalier manner in which he made the statement, as if he thought that learning a foreign language would require effort similar to that required to reading the latest best seller. I also heard a Des Moines talk-show host, his head chock-full of history, philosophy, theories and solutions say, ‘I need to pick up a little Spanish so that I can understand the announcers covering European soccer on cable telecasts.’ Apparently he felt that there was nothing to learning Spanish, that it would be as simple as picking a pebble from the beach. The truth is that rapid-fire slang and colloquial expressions used in a sports context require a thorough understanding of a variety of Spanish verbs in all tenses and moods, as well as extensive vocabulary and grammar. The idea of ‘picking up a little Spanish’ in order to listen to (and comprehend) a sports broadcast is, of course, naïve.

Another contributor to the motivation bank of the adult learner in this study was Morris “Moe” Berg, a Princeton graduate and former major league catcher from 1923 through 1939 with four different baseball teams. Dawidoff (1994) writes that Berg, while an Ivy League student and baseball player at Princeton, spent a semester at the Sorbonne in foreign language study and eventually became a spy for the U.S. as a successful OSS (Office of Strategic Services, forerunner to the CIA) operative during World War II. He was reputedly a linguist fluent in several languages. The link that David has with Moe Berg is that David learned from reading of Berg’s language study adventures that opportunities to experience foreign culture and language are available nearly everywhere. Berg used ethnic neighborhoods of major league cities as a resource for improving his language skills, and

David has used this strategy of local resources in his own pursuits of diverse language experiences in Des Moines and Central Iowa. Another link with Berg is their athletic background, prior to language teaching, David was a basketball coach having held coaching positions in Japan (Okinawa), Mozambique, Australia and the U.S.

### Conclusions

One must be discrete in attempting to draw definitive conclusions from a personal case study of this nature, as much of the description and analysis is of a subjective nature. Nevertheless, this type of qualitative methodology is frequently used in the field of Second Language Acquisition research and therefore implications of value could be drawn from the results. As previously pointed out in the Review of Literature, it is commonly accepted in the field of Second Language Acquisition that young people, those twelve years of age and under, are generally more successful in acquiring a second language than an adult, especially an adult in his late fifties to early sixties. The subject in this study did not speak more than a word or two of Spanish at the age of fifty-nine, but through a self-styled learning program was considered an advanced speaker of that language by the age of sixty-five. It cannot be concluded that anyone of a similar age could do the same, although that could, of course, happen and probably has on many occasions. Unusual motivation drove the learning process and was reported as an important non-language factor in the L2 progress of the adult learner in this case study.

It is generally recognized and accepted in our culture that mental abilities diminish with age, which we seem to accept as a normal. The term, “senior moment”, refers to forgetfulness among older people and is a euphemism for this cognitive change through

aging. An implication of David's achievements in foreign language study is that older people can continue to learn and therefore might consider accepting creative intellectual challenges to enhance their own well-being. Hultsch (1999) gives support to this idea as he found a link between intellectually challenging activities and improved cognitive functioning among a population of 250 middle-aged and older adults. He observed that people who maintained or increased participation in reading, crossword puzzles, taking classes, etc., this type of intellectual activity, showed less decline in mental functioning with the passage of time than those who had decreased participation in such activities.

Language learning is an activity which requires consistent physical, mental and spiritual effort and thus would be in the category of the intellectually challenging activities associated with maintaining mental abilities with aging. This discussion could be of interest to all readers, because regardless of current age, all of us are aging. David, the subject of this study whose principal motivation was intellectual achievement not language study to retard aging, concurs with the findings of the works of Hultsch and reports that language study has energized him and made his life more interesting.

### Personal Reflection

This thesis is a discussion of a sixty-five-old-man and his experiences in the study of Portuguese and Spanish at this stage of his life. When asked to reflect on this adult learning experience, David replied as follows:

Even though I have made significant progress in the study of Portuguese and Spanish, I am by no means at the end of the project. I see these two languages as my lifelong companions. I enjoy every aspect of the language learning process – proactively seeking



second language conversation opportunities everyday, vocabulary study, grammar study and analysis, phonetic practice with tutors and/or tape recorders and with DVD's. I cannot recall a moment when I seriously considered giving up on the process. I have learned to enjoy it and I have also learned to keep daily expectations down at a realistic level and effort up, above expectations. I focus on the work of study, the process, not the result. The work is an end in itself.

One of the subtle prizes of second language study has been my discovery and appreciation of Portuguese and Spanish literature. My first Spanish tutor, Paloma Soria, noticed that much of my dialogue in our study sessions was about the books that I was reading at the time, in 1997. She once asked me if I had ever read any Spanish language writers. I had not. However, I followed her cue and immediately began reading the works of Gabriel García Márquez and then writing my impressions of what I had read in a diary. In the beginning of this reading-writing program, I used the Iowa State Library as a source for the books, but eventually I began to buy them and have established my own Spanish language library.

Reading is a valuable learning tool to complement the study sessions with the native language tutors, as I am able to see words, phrases and grammar "in action" in the books that I choose to read. I have developed a system for reading Spanish language literature which includes marking in the book with a felt-tip pen the word I want to look up, but not looking up that word until the end of the reading session. I then make a list of these words and then seek their meaning in a comprehensive dictionary after having completed the reading, thus avoiding the interruptions in going back-and-forth between the book and the dictionary. I have kept the vocabulary word lists for study purposes and can identify the books

themselves from the topics expressed through the words which appear on the lists. I made the decision and commitment to read only Spanish language books for a six month period in 2001 and eventually extended that period to one year. Since then, the majority of my recreational reading is in Portuguese and Spanish.

I recall “a break through” in the comprehension of written Spanish in the reading of *Relato de un naufrago* (Story of a Shipwreck), the García Márquez factual account of a Colombian sailor who survived ten days alone in a raft in the Carribean Sea after being a victim of a controversial shipwreck on a Colombian destroyer in 1955. I was acutely aware that I was comprehending the writing because I was feeling strong emotions as the sailor struggled to survive adrift in the ocean. Encouraged by the progress in the reading of *Naufrago*, I then selected other classics by the great Colombian literary figure, “Gabo” (García Márquez), including *El amor en los tiempos de cólera* (Love in the Time of Cholera), *Noticias de un secuestro* (News of a Kidnapping), *El coronel no tiene que le escriba* (No One Writes to the Colonel) and *Crónica de una muerte anunciada* (Chronicle of a Death Foretold). Although I realize that I still do not pick up on every subtlety in the second language readings, as I read rapidly and for pleasure, the progress in comprehension has continued. I note that in reading in his first language, an effective reader does not need to read, nor understand, every word in the text that is being read. My emotions are usually in tune with the ups and downs of the experiences of the characters and the events in these works of García Marquéz and with the actual events in the writer’s life recorded in his 2002 autobiography, *Vivir para contarla*. (Living to Tell It).

The reading of Spanish literature led to my interest in doing an independent study with Professor Eugenio Matibag of Iowa State in the summer of 2000 in which I wrote a

paper about the role of death as a recurring theme in the works of García Márquez and those of Carlos Fuentes. Later I took a Hispanoamerican literature course under Professor Matibag at Iowa State and a similar survey of Portuguese literature course taught in that language by Daniel Balderston and Maria Duarte at the University of Iowa. I felt that these classes were of particular value because Eugenio Matibag and Daniel Balderston are skilled non-native speakers, Matibag in Spanish and Balderston in Spanish and Portuguese. Both teachers provided inspiration and hope for me as a non- native speaker aspiring to continue a course of improvement in my personal language learning project.

Prior to taking the Portuguese literature course at Iowa, I had developed an interest in the writings of José Saramago, the Portuguese Nobel Prize winner, and had read Saramago's Spanish language versions of *El año de la muerte de Ricardo Reis* (The Year of the Death of Ricardo Reis) and *El hombre duplicado* (The Duplicate Man). For a final project in Daniel Balderston's Portuguese class at Iowa in 2003, I wrote an eighteen page paper titled "*Fernando Pessoa: Estou aqui*" (Fernando Pessoa: I Am Here), in which I did an "interview" with Fernando Pessoa in 1973 after his death in 1935 over coffee at the *Café Continental* in Lourenço Marques, Mozambique, where I had worked for three years in the seventies. This longer paper in Portuguese was a revision and expansion of a short essay which I had written previously in Spanish called *La terraza* (The Patio), a description of a meeting between Fernando Pessoa and Gabriel García Márquez at Baudelaire's, the Ames restaurant, owned by a family of Brazilians, located across the street from the Iowa State campus. Included in the expanded writing was my analysis of Pessoa's poem, "*Tabacaria*" (Tobacco Shop), and a detailed personal dialogue between The Poet and me, along with an appearance by Camões, all based on some historical fact and some "creative fact", regarding

Mr. Pessoa's life and works. The significance of the words in the title "*Estou aqui*" (I am here) is, according to Saramago in The Year of the Death of Ricardo Reis, that these words appear on the tombstone of Fernando Pessoa in the *O cemitério de prazeres* (The Cemetery of Pleasures) where he is buried in Lisbon, Portugal. I was intrigued by the personality and works of Pessoa and haunted by the impact of his final words written the evening of his death, *Não sei o que amanhã me reserva*, ("I don't know what tomorrow has in store for me."). He was The Poet to the very end. Upon the approval and encouragement of Professor Balderston, I submitted my paper, *Estou aqui*, on Fernando Pessoa in 2004 to *Torre de Papel*, the literary periodical of the Spanish and Portuguese Department at the University of Iowa, for consideration to be published. Thus, a subtle benefit of my language learning project has been the opportunity to read selected Spanish and Portuguese writers in their native language and also to reflect in their language my impressions of what I have read. Both the reading and writing are sources of pleasure, fun, deep satisfaction and learning.

I consider the three years spent in Lourenço Marques, Mozambique from 1971-1974 as the key to my interest in pursuing the study of Spanish and Portuguese. When I arrived in Lourenço Marques in September of 1971, I spoke neither language. Portuguese was the official language in Mozambique and I had an excellent opportunity to learn it as I worked for three Portuguese basketball clubs as their head coach during my stay there. I did not use the time effectively to study Portuguese, but I did, through a number of short bursts of study over the three year stay and the daily exposure to the language on the street, at my job and in the hotel in which I lived, develop a reasonable foundation in vocabulary and conversation. I was able to carry this language background into the tutoring sessions with Rejane Orticelli in Pella, Iowa twenty years later and convert those experiences to eventual fluency. I

returned to Lisbon in 1997 to use my Portuguese among native speakers and to renew old friendships with former basketball players from Mozambique including Mario Albuquerque, Nelson Serra, Rui Pinheiro, Paulo Carvalho and Quim Neves.

Since that visit, I have continued a steady flow of electronic communication with these special friends and others from Lourenço Marques who now live in Portugal. Alexander Franco, who was a young sports writer in Lourenço Marques during the 1970's, is another regular contact for me. He is a sports editor and television sportscaster in Toronto, a city with 500,000 Portuguese speakers. We correspond exclusively in the Portuguese language and I enjoy not only the personal interface with the past and old friends, but also the compliments from them on my written Portuguese. The ability to communicate with the Portuguese world on a personal level is another source of fun and satisfaction derived from *La escuela doméstica*, the "official" name of the unofficial school that I developed incrementally with tutors to promote my own second language learning.

An additional notable benefit from the dedication to language study has been the development of a relationship of mutual respect with the Hispanic members of *El grupo*, a Des Moines based Spanish speaking group of Alcoholics Anonymous. I attended my first meeting with *El grupo* in 1997 after I had begun Spanish tutoring sessions with Paloma Soria and have continued my contact with *El grupo* through the past seven years. Prior to attending these meetings, I overestimated the influence of my Portuguese, which was at a point of fluency at the time, as a force in my ability to speak and understand the language spoken at *El grupo*, which is a very colloquial, *obrero* (blue collar) street Spanish laced with colorful obscenities. Each meeting challenges my listening skills. As I progressed with my Spanish through the tutoring sessions, I was invited to speak at AA Hispanic group

anniversaries, which are special occasion Saturday evening speaker-dinner-dance meetings, in various cities and towns in Iowa. The talks, in which I shared my experience, strength and hope in alcoholic recovery, were particularly challenging because I was aware that not everyone at the anniversary meetings knew me, nor particularly supported the idea of a *gringo* playing a prominent part in the celebration. Also, the Hispanic anniversary meetings usually have up to a hundred in attendance and are for the entire family, which means that the speakers must learn to adapt to the constant noise and confusion of children playing along with people constantly coming and going. I prepared myself for the distractions, expecting them, and learned to concentrate in a second language through anything that happened to occur in the delivering of a my message. The public speaking under these circumstances gave me a boost in confidence in using my second language among strangers. I am pleased with my relationship with *El grupo*. I get no special treatment. I am simply another recovering member, only one with an accent.

Another important outcome from the work done in second language learning through *La escuela doméstica* is the development of impetus toward a second career as a teacher of Spanish and English as a Second Language. I have been teaching in both of these areas in Des Moines Area Community College system for the past three years. My own experience in learning a second language has been invaluable in working with immigrants in Iowa trying to learn English and American students who are for various reasons taking Spanish courses. My pro-active participation as a language learner the past eight years through the *La escuela doméstica* complemented by the decision to take Spanish and Portuguese graduate courses at Iowa State University and the University of Iowa respectively in a Master's Degree program from Iowa State – all of these factors along with my previous diverse experiences as a

classroom teacher and as a coach have provided to me solid preparation for a second career as a language teacher. I decided to do the formal university language study when I realized that the practical side of my language learning was far outdistancing my theoretical understanding of what I was actually doing. Courses in linguistics at Iowa State, coupled with two summer seminars on the topic of action research through Iowa State's National Foreign Language Resource Center, were instrumental in filling the void in my understanding and appreciation for the theoretical aspect of language learning. In addition to the academic work at Iowa State and Iowa, I took also a demanding correspondence course in Spanish from the University of Toronto and two undergraduate courses in Spanish grammar via correspondence also through Southwest Texas State University as a part of building my second language background.

I have referred to "a second career" as a language teacher in the previous paragraph. I am now sixty-five years old and had been working, obviously, prior to my commitment to language study. I graduated from Grinnell (Iowa) High School in 1957, then received a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Cornell College (Iowa) in 1962, a Master's Degree from Northeast Missouri State University in 1970 and a Doctor of Arts Degree from Middle Tennessee State University in 1975. My undergraduate and graduate major was Health, Physical Education and Recreation (HPER) with a Psychology and Higher Education minors at the doctoral level. It had been my career objective to become a college basketball coach, athletic director and teacher. I never ever quite "landed" in regard to that type of job. After graduating from Cornell College in 1962, I was a teacher and basketball coach in the Iowa public schools at West Liberty and Prairie City for five years. I then worked as a teacher, coach and athletic director with the Department of Defense Overseas Schools at Kubasaki

High School on Okinawa for two years followed by doctoral study at Middle Tennessee State. It was a time where in the triune of (my) life, the physical was dominant with coaching basketball as my principal interest, yet among academics of that generation a doctorate in the field of health and physical education was considered by some a damning qualification. However, when the physical is ignored, life is usually short. The active, probing minds of these critics of the physical must work rapidly, for its life span is brief, especially brief if it is housed in a sedentary body. With the passage of time, those who gloried in the intellectual while spiting the physical are no longer here or not getting around very well these days. As a physical educator also interested in the psychology and sociology of sport, I have always recognized physical fitness as a prominent source of human energy, which has been an asset to me in my pursuit of second language fluency at a rather advanced age. Language study requires strength, endurance and discipline. I embarked upon 50 years ago (and continue today) a daily program of personal physical fitness based on today's "cutting edge" *avant garde* fitness research, most of which was actually done in the 1950's and 1960's, decades before a proper, multi-colored jogging outfit was a necessary prerequisite to perspiring.

Upon completing my doctoral course work in 1972, I was offered the job on Okinawa again and decided to accept. While taking a pre-employment physical examination at Arnold Air Force Base in Tennessee, I had a conversation with the doctor administering the exam and he said that his parents had been missionaries in Africa. Ironically, I had been offered a basketball coaching job in Lourenço Marques, Mozambique at the same time the Okinawa offer occurred and had not yet turned the African offer down. After the conversation with the Air Force doctor, I decided to go to Mozambique and not go to Okinawa again. I worked in Lourenço Marques from 1971-1974 and also lived in Pretoria,



South Africa during that time period. I wrote a doctoral dissertation in Africa and also met my wife, Geneva, there, who was a U.S. Foreign Service employee assigned to the United States Consulate in Lourenço Marques.

After returning from Africa in 1974, which was hastened by a civil war in Mozambique, Geneva and I lived in Grinnell, Kansas City, Florida and Australia. I worked in Australia as State Director of Coaching in the State of Queensland Amateur Basketball Association. I was the only paid employee in a state association which supported all levels of basketball competition in the state. Later, I became the head coach of the Hobart Devils in the National Basketball League of Australia and worked in Tasmania for four years. Upon returning to Des Moines in 1989, I worked as Program Director for the Marycrest College college degree program at Camp Dodge, the Iowa National Guard base in Johnston. I was the administrator and also taught psychology courses to adult students, many military personnel, seeking a Bachelor's Degree. When a Japanese company assumed control of Marycrest College in 1992, the Marycrest program at Camp Dodge was closed and Grand View College stepped into the Marycrest role there. Since then I have worked in my own basketball recruiting business and have recruited and placed on a fee basis qualified American professional players in jobs in Asia, Africa, Australia and South America. I eventually had had enough of the travel involved in my recruiting work and in the late 1990's I made the commitment to second language learning. Although I had not planned nor predicted a second career as a language teacher, I am currently teaching Spanish 101 and 102 at Des Moines Area Community College and have taught also ESL classes there.

In summary, my commitment to second language learning has given me a huge lift in the areas of self-esteem, intellectual development and quality of life in general. I am

comfortable with the priorities in my life which are centered in language learning. I cannot imagine life without Spanish and Portuguese literature nor can I think of a more interesting and satisfying second career than language teaching, which gives me an opportunity to take advantage of the various professional experiences in my life and channel them into teaching and learning activities. Learning a second language is a journey with no apparent destination, often a bumpy ride, with fascinating traveling companions. I am now considering taking these experiences in the “bumpy ride” of *La escuela doméstica* and recording them in the form of a book, yet another benefit and spin-off of the second language learning process.

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## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

Criteria for Ratings: ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines

(5) Superior level speakers are characterized by the ability to:

- participate fully and effectively in conversations in formal and informal settings on topics related to practical needs and areas of professional and/or scholarly interests.
- Provide a structured argument to explain and defend opinions and develop effective hypothesis within extended discourse
- Discuss topics concretely and abstractly
- Deal with a linguistically unfamiliar situation
- Maintain a high degree of linguistic accuracy
- Satisfy the linguistic demands of professional and/or scholarly life.

(4) Advanced Speakers

- participate actively in conversations in most informal and some formal settings on topics of personal and public interest
- narrate and describe in major time frames with good controls of aspect
- deal effectively with unanticipated complications through a variety of communicative devices
- sustain communication by using, with suitable accuracy and confidence, connected discourse of paragraph length and substance
- satisfy the demands of work and/or school situations.

### (3) Intermediate Speaker

- participate in simple, direct conversations on generally predictable subjects related to daily activities and person environment
- create with the language and communicate personal meaning to sympathetic interlocutors by combining language elements in discrete sentences and strings of sentences
- obtain and give information by asking and answering questions
- sustain and bring to a close a number of basic, uncomplicated exchanges, often in a reactive mode
- satisfy simple personal needs and social demands to survive in target language

### (2) Novice

- respond to simple questions on the most common features of daily life
- convey minimal meaning to interlocutors experienced in dealing with foreigners by using isolated words, lists of words, memorized phrases and some personalized recombinations of words and phrases
- satisfy a very limited number of immediate needs

## APPENDIX B

Personal Essay

Personal essay written by subject of the present study, David, which was published in

Wapsipinicon Almanac, 8, November 1999.

## WINE:

## Learning Portuguese and Spanish in Later Life

Dave Adkins

Ben Loman went to Africa as a young man. When he returns from the jungle, he exclaims, "By God I was rich." I can relate to Uncle Ben's claim in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*. He was referring to material wealth, however. I brought back from my experiences in Mozambique another kind of treasure, a nagging desire to become fluent in Portuguese. I felt that the Portuguese language would serve as my direct link to those memorable days on the dark continent and would provide instant recall of some rich experiences there.

Learning a foreign language is much like travel itself; the shadow of the endeavour often exceeds its substance. Perceived as prestigious and glamorous by many, in reality, foreign travel and language study are both deceptively hard work. It is, of course, much easier to get on an airplane and ride passively, hour-after-hour, than to tackle actively with all of one's mental, physical, and spiritual resources the subjunctive mood or reflexive verbs.

A 40-year-old book seller, an avid reader, once said to me, offhandedly, "Someday I'm going to have to take some time to learn a second language." It wasn't what he said that piqued my interest. It was the cavalier manner in which he made the statement, as if he

thought that learning a foreign tongue would require effort similar to that required to read the latest bestseller. I also heard a Des Moines talk-show host, his head chock-full of history, philosophy, theories, and solutions say, "I need to pick up a little Spanish so that I can understand the announcers covering European soccer on cable telecasts." Apparently, he felt that there was nothing to learning Spanish, that it would be simple as plucking a pebble from the beach. The truth is that rapid-fire slang and colloquial expressions used in a sports context require a thorough understanding of a variety of Spanish verbs in all tenses and moods, as well as extensive vocabulary and grammar. The idea of "picking up a little Spanish" in order to listen to (and comprehend) a sports' broadcast is, of course, naive.

In another world and in another life (the 1950's at Grinnell High School in Iowa), I took two years of Latin from a dedicated teacher, Miss Karstens. I had never felt such anxiety in a classroom before, having been an above-average student and comfortable in all classes spoken in my native English. However, every time I opened my mouth in Latin class, I risked major error and embarrassment, although the teacher was the only one to recognize my inadequacies, because my classmates were, for the most part, as apathetic and as poorly prepared as I. However, I did come to understand from this experience that the courage to err was a requirement in learning any foreign language. Nevertheless, I was not able to overcome this fear of error, so that each day I left my Latin at the classroom door.

In college, two years of a foreign language were a general education requirement in the liberal arts curriculum at Cornell College. I started fast with a rather strong interest in French, but I fizzled again and backed away from a firm commitment to the new language. An excuse for my mediocrity in this effort could have been the lack of reinforcement of French outside of the five hours per week of class contact. Even though a small-town Iowa college in the 1950's was an unpromising atmosphere for the study of French, learning inevitably becomes the responsibility of the student. I could have been more motivated, committed, and disciplined - critical factors in the mastery of any second language. The gift I

carried away from the four-semester experience in French was the understanding that I had thrown away another opportunity. Still I was determined that someday I would compensate for that disappointment.

After working seven years as a secondary-school teacher and coach, five years in Iowa and two years with Department of Defense Schools on Okinawa, I accepted a basketball coaching job in Lourenco Marques, Mozambique. The team, *Academica*, was semi-pro and involved in national club competition. The official language in that African country is Portuguese. I lived in Lourenco Marques, now called Maputo, for three years. In that time I shuttled between periods of intense study and use of the Portuguese language and a retreat into the familiarity of my native tongue spoken in the small English community there.

At the time I was in my early thirties and writing a doctoral dissertation comparing levels of physical fitness of African university students and their counterparts at colleges in the United States. I thought of myself as capable, yet when I spoke in my second language, O Português, I communicated at an elementary-school level. I was just as I was in high school Latin, at risk of embarrassment and humiliation, even more so.

In my new world, I became upset, even angry, when the listener didn't understand. I felt humiliated when he or she chuckled, or even smiled, at my heavy accent (*sotaque carregado*). In fact, my first experience in feeling this helplessness in the face of the Portuguese language was in Lisbon in 1972. I had applied for a work permit for Mozambique, then a Portuguese state. I was attempting to answer questions in the application posed by an arrogant Lisbon police officer. He was in my face and wouldn't let up. He kept repeating in strongly accented English, "Why don't you speak Portuguese? I do not understand. You want to go to Mozambique, but you do not speak Portuguese. I don't understand. . ." Count that experience as another motivator in my quest of fluency in Portuguese. Signals of rejection, some not so subtle, have driven many aspiring language students back to exclusive use of their native

tongue or to the memorization of a few pat foreign phrases to drop in English conversation for effect.

Nevertheless, I persisted and established in those three years in Mozambique a base in vocabulary and grammar for future learning. While I was limited to the level of routine conversation, I did make headway, and this time I was hooked and began a lifetime relationship with Portuguese. Podia o entender e me fazia entendido, mas desejava mais. (I could understand it and I could make myself understood, but I wanted more).

After returning from Africa, I spent the next 25 years in the United States and Australia (Brisbane and Hobart) busy with my basketball coaching career. But during this period I maintained interest in Portuguese and listened to an occasional dialogue on tape, read some Brazilian magazines and newspapers, and corresponded with Portuguese friends from Mozambique relocated to Portugal. Also, I will admit to having had this recurring picture of myself seated on a stool in a sleazy bar with overhead fans, drinking martinis from a long-stemmed glass, and casually conversing in Portuguese with shady characters. Unfortunately, at that time I had spent more time with the martinis than with the Portuguese. Nevertheless, the dream of fluency was still alive.

In January 1996, I finally felt old enough with sufficient clarity of purpose to take the plunge. I called the Office for Latino Affairs in Des Moines, a town with a population of about 12,000 Hispanics, and told Sylvia, the director, of my interest in locating a native Portuguese speaker for one-on-one tutoring. Sylvia, it happened, knew of a Brazilian woman, recently married to an American in Pella, a town only 45-minutes away.

Next day, I called Rejane (pronounced Ra-jenny), and told her in my halting Portuguese what I wanted. I drove to Pella at least once a week (semanalmente) since, and during that first year often went twice weekly. I maintained this schedule for over three years. We met for two hours in the board room of The Town Crier, a Pella printing company owned by Rejane's American family from her days as a foreign exchange student at the local



high school in 1976. Although Rejane speaks and understands English very well, I requested from day one that we speak only in Portuguese, which she preferred, that she correct my every error, and that we keep articulation, beyond fluency, as the long-term objective and as our standard.

One day Rejane suggested I should consider studying Spanish also. I hesitated to commit time to another language. I was making notable progress in spoken and written Portuguese, to a level of genuine fluency, and I was concerned that I would disrupt that learning process. Later, after the fact, I learned that my concerns over possible confusion from the simultaneous study of Portuguese and Spanish were well-founded. Dr. Mario Pei, a language expert at Columbia University, wrote that learning to speak Portuguese and Spanish at the same time was not a good idea. At the time, I was not aware of Dr. Pei's opinion, so I pondered the study of Spanish for about three months and finally decided to give it a try.

My Brazilian teacher introduced me to my future Spanish tutor, Paloma Soria, from Madrid, a mother of four and married to Samuel, a professor of languages at Central College. Samuel was born in Ghana and educated there. He later studied in Madrid and at Ohio State University and also coined the term, *Escuela Domestica* (Home School), to describe my Spanish sessions at his family's kitchen table on Friday afternoons.

It wasn't long before I had a chance to test my developing Spanish in a practical situation. I traveled to Spain in January, 1997, to promote the placement of American basketball players in the professional Spanish ACB League. At the time, I had been studying Spanish with Paloma Soria about five months. I was still relying heavily on Portuguese vocabulary in Spanish conversation. I checked into my hotel near the bull-fight arena, Plaza de Toros, and then casually walked into the hotel bar for a sandwich and coffee. When ordering the chicken sandwich, I mispronounced pollo (poll-yo) saying the word as it appears in English, as if I were ordering a horse, rider, ball, and mallet.

I had had no problem in conversing over coffee with the young Spanish bartender prior

to the 'pollo' moment. He spoke no English, however, and began to panic when he couldn't understand me. He made a quick telephone call and within two minutes his supervisor appeared, who fortunately spoke some Portuguese. The word which we mutually understood was frango, which means chicken in Portuguese. I learned from that experience that learning Spanish, or any other language, required precise pronunciation.

João Albuquerque, a Portuguese friend who was born in Mozambique and now lives in Lisbon, chided me for learning Portuguese from a Brazilian teacher. One sunny, but chilly winter afternoon in January, 1997, as we kept warm over bicas, the short, stout espresso coffee served in Lisbon's sidewalk cafes, João asked me, "Why are you learning Portuguese from a Brazilian? That is like choosing the United States over England to study English. Go to the source."

In the first six months of the simultaneous study of Spanish and Portuguese, I found myself speaking and writing Portunhol, a mixture of the two languages. At one point, Paloma Soria became frustrated with my mixing Portuguese words into Spanish dialogue. She actually glared at me and said, "You should visit Galicia. they speak Portunhol there." (Galicia is a region of northern Spain which shares common border with Portugal and where a mixture of the two languages is spoken.) Her message was important. It reinforced the importance of distinguishing between very similar Portuguese and Spanish words. For example, to recruit in Portuguese is recrutar and in Spanish is reclutar. And cognates, words which can be spelled the same, can be "false friends." Oficina in Portuguese means factory or warehouse, while in Spanish the same word means office. I learned the difference the hard way in Lisbon one afternoon looking for the Telecom Basketball Club. Asking directions to the Telecom oficina, I walked for over an hour (in the wrong direction) and ended up at one of that company's equipment storage facilities, a warehouse, miles from the basketball office.

Paloma Soria had to give up tutoring me and is now busy with her family of four children and her studies at Central College. She found me a temporary replacement, Loly, a

student and teaching assistant at Central. I worked with Loly for five months on a weekly basis until the end of the 1999 spring semester. In May she returned to her home near Madrid for summer vacation and to prepare for grad school at Purdue University. I have since recruited two new staff members to the faculty of the Escuela Domestica. I now meet twice a week with Cecilia of Buenos Aires, who is living in Ames with her husband Marcus, an engineer on assignment with a Des Moines construction firm. Cecilia is a motivated teacher and speaks with a strong Castilian accent. My other Spanish colleague is Daniel, a retired Mexican-American whom I meet with one hour per week for rapid-fire dialogue.

And let's not forget the increasing presence of Spanish-speaking people in Iowa. Census figures show that 10 years ago 33,000 Hispanics lived in Iowa compared to 48,000 Blacks. Iowa State University researchers expect Hispanics to outnumber Blacks in Iowa when stats from the 2000 census are released. One doesn't need to look far to sense this presence.

I had never studied Portuguese or Spanish in a structured, university setting. The individual instruction with native speakers has, of course, been invaluable. However, I was curious about the benefits of study in a classroom environment. I interviewed with Joanna, a Portuguese profesor at Iowa State University in December 1999. A standardized test and dialogue with Joanna showed that I should be able to compete in Advanced Spanish Conversation, which I took for graduate credit.

The class has been beneficial in that the teacher, Carmen from Spain, relied on an organized, disciplined approach to teach her native Castilian. The class of sixteen has given me peers, who have provided a basis for measuring my level of understanding and my progress during the semester. I also have become aware of the impact of my grounding in Portuguese on the (mis)pronunciacion of Spanish words, which demand a crisp, pure enunciacion. Carmen has referred to my *acento cerrado*, a closed accent. Because of the conversation class, I have become eager to take other graduate courses in Spanish and Portuguese. I eventually plan to write a master's thesis in Spanish.

*Nunca diria que eu falo (o hablo) nem escrevo o português ou o espanhol no nível da minha língua materna."* I, of course, would never say that I speak or write Portuguese and/or Spanish at the same level as my mother-tongue. Now, at sixty, the patience and discipline required to continue to move forward in this fascinating learning process have been extremely important in making my mind sharper, my energy level higher, and my life more interesting and more productive. Much joy is derived from becoming aware of my incremental progress in comprehension achieved through persistent study. I also find reading, writing, and speaking the other languages to be a positive escape from daily stress and an effective way to relax "in another world." My primary motivation to Portuguese and Spanish remains personal growth through the wonder of the learning experience itself, which, like fine wine, has become richer with age.

Dave Adkins

DAdkins105@aol.com

## APPENDIX C

Interlanguage Notes

Sample of Interlanguage: Notes by Tutors recorded during language study sessions dating from June 21, 2000 to October 25, 2003. Tutors included in this Appendix are as follows: Clare (Colombia), Clemen (Colombia), Carmen (Spain), Cecilia (Argentina), Joel (Mexico), Rocio (Spain) and Olga (Cuba).

**6/21/00: Cecilia**

*experiencias diferentes de las de mis compañeros* (different experiences from my compas)

*experiencias diferentes de las que mis compas tuvieron* (different experiences from what they had)

*cuando llegamos a Pella, cuando visitamos Pella* (when we arrived in Pella, when we visited Pella)

*Sam ha dejado crecer un bigote y se ha afeitado su cabeza* (Sam has let a mustache grow and has shaved his head)

*comunicarme con alguien* (to communicate with someone)

*adaptarme a algo* (to adapt myself to something)

*vincularse con algo* (to link with something)

*depender de algo* (to depend on something)

*identificarme con algo* (to identify with something)

*luchar por* (to fight for something)

*obsesionada con* (to obsess over)

*preocuparse por* (to worry about)      *meter en* (to place in)

*costar el costo de hacer el negocio* (the cost of doing business)

*la costa del sol*      *el costo* (the cost) / *la costa* (the coast)

*pilotear él piloteó el avión* (he piloted the plane)

*los alumnos vinieron desde distintas partes para estudiar en la prestigiosa escuela* (the students came from everywhere to study at the prestigious school)

*encantarse/gustarse*

*enamorarse de*

*el próximo día: al día siguiente* (the next day)

*demonstrando: demostrando* (demonstrating):

*traducción* (translation)

*ella tiene la habilidad de adaptar: adaptarse* (she has the ability to adapt- reflexive)

*Iowa tiene más personas con cien años que otros estados o (de que otros estados tienen)*  
(Iowa has more people of 100 years of age than other states)

*cuando Geneva estudió* (when Geneva studied)

*los centenarios* (the centenarians)

*rectificar* (to rectify)

**7/6/00 Cecilia**

Jesucristo

Acento (accent)

Subtítulos (subtitles)

los rusos (the Russians)

los ciudadanos de Rusia (citizens of Russia)

partido comunista (Communist Party)

ellos estaban rodeados por los soldados (they were surrounded by the soldiers)

la fuerza militar (the armed force)

tomé la decisión de (made the decision to)

el capitán los mató con la pistola (the captain killed them with the pistol)

ellos estaban asignados (they were assigned)

la cárcel (the jail)

llegaron a Grecia, pero visité Grecia (they arrived in Greece, but visited Greece)

30 años más (30 years more)

el doctor arregló la huida a Grecia (the doctor arranged the escape to Greece)

Vivían bajo la mano del estado comunista (they were living under the hand of the communist state)

el médico (the doctor)

los pensamientos (the thoughts)

el líder (the leader)

la guerra (the leader)

*luchar por* (to fight for something)

*obsesionada con* (to obsess over)

### **Notas de Carmen 9-30-00**

*mi madre cayó. corrección: mi madre se cayó y se quebró la cadera* (my mother fell and broke her hip)

*Le visité dos veces: la (mi madre) visité dos veces.* (I visited her twice)

*el próximo día: al día siguiente* (the next day)

*demonstrando: demostrando* (demonstrating):

*Iowa tiene más personas con cien años que otros estados o (de que otros estados tienen)*

(Iowa has more people of 100 years of age than other states)

*cuando Geneva estudió* (when Geneva studied)

*los centenarios* (the centenarians)

*rectificar* (to rectify)

### **Notas de la notita de email de Carmen y de la charla con Cecilia y Clare 1-7-01**

*espero que su vida vaya bien* (I hope your life is going well –subj.)

*ellos tienen suerte de que está disponible para enseñarlos* (they are lucky that you are available to teach them)

*los aspectos técnicos* (the technical aspects)

*ella huyó de la tiranía de Castro (huir de)* (she fled the tyranny of Castro)

*los profesores proporcionan la información y gozo de la variedad de la instrucción* (the teachers provide the information and I benefit from the variety of the instruction)

*por obvio - no existe. . use obviamente* (obviously, it doesn't exist, you use obviously)

*la habilidad de comunicarme en otra lengua. . . de comuniarme al menos* (the ability to communicate in another language, at least communicate)

*el próximo día: al día siguiente* (the next day)

*demonstrando: demostrando* (demonstrating):

*traducción* (translation)



*ella tiene la habilidad de adaptar: adaptarse* (she has the ability to adapt- reflexive)

### **Notas de Olga y Broadlawns 2-1-01**

*logar, conseguir, alcanzar* (attain, manage, reach)

*brillar* (to shine)

*monitorear* (to monitor)

*un tornillo en la rodilla* (a screw in the knee)

*el cirujano* (the surgeon)

*rellenar las formas* (to fill out the forms)

*el próximo día: al día siguiente* (the next day)

*demonstrando: demostrando* (demonstrating):

*traducción* (translation)

*ella tiene la habilidad de adaptar: adaptarse* (she has the ability to adapt- reflexive)

### **Carmen and Cecilia: Review continued 6.15.01**

*mi programa de recuperación* (my program of recovery)

*un espacio, el espacio* (a space, the space)

*nunca cumplió con sus promesas, era negligente* (never kept his promises, he was negligent)

*él me acusó de una conspiración* (he accused me of a conspiracy)

*ellos han tenido que afrontar el problema* (he has had to face his problems)

*noté la decepción de ellos a causa del comportamiento del padre* (I noticed their disappointment due to behavior of the father)

*vive para tomar, para usar drogas, para conseguir a las mujeres y para buscar reconocimiento de la prensa* (live to drink, to drug, to chase women and to seek recognition from the press)

*una temporada* (a season)

*le dije que iba a apoyarlo* (I told him I was going to support him)

*he tenido bajar mis expectativas hacia él* (I have had to lower my expectations of him)

*a mi no me gusta hacerlo* (I don't like to do it.)

### **Carmen and Cecilia: Notes and Review continued –7.01.01**

*la voluntad de Dios* (will of God)

*desviarse* (evade a question)

*aire acondicionado* (air conditioned)

*tiene que ver con el alcoholismo* (has to do with alcoholism)

*el entrenamiento* (the training session)

*él fue a Australia* (he went to Australia)

*después de esta temporada* (after this season)

*cumplir con una obligación* (honor an obligation)

*se divorció de su esposa* (he was divorced from his wife)

*los hijos habían aprendido* (the children had learned\_

*su responsabilidad hacia su familia* (his responsibility to his family\_

*ha comenzado a aumentar su uso de las drogas* (he has begun to increase use of drugs)

*los años anteriores* (the years before)

*acelerar, escalar* (accelerate, escalate)

*3 años y pico de sobriedad* (over 3 years of sobriety)

*divorciarse* (to divorce)

*él está celoso de mi relación con los hijos* (he is jealous of my relationship with his sons)

*como padrino* (as Godfather)

*el hábito del padre* (the habit of the father)

*estaba asombrado* (he was amazed)

no tiene que tomar para resolver los problemas (he doesn't have to drink to resolve his problems)

### **Citas de la semana de 7-23-01 con Cecilia y Carmen (Notes and Review)**

*Ceci apodo* (nickname)

*el antílope* (antelope)

*el león* (lion)

*la jirafa* (giraffe)

*las fotos* (photos)

*ibamos* (we were going, we went)

*los fines de semana son libres hasta al final del semestre* (week-ends are free until the end of the semester)

*los rinocerentes* (rhinos)

*un ambient sinestro con la presencia de las nubes oscuras* (a sinister atmosphere with the presence of dark clouds)

*el canguro* (the kangaroo)

*el oso koala* (koala bear)

*los aborígenes* (the aborigines)

*el crucigrama* (the crossword)

### **Notas de Cecilia de 8.29.01**

*regatear* (casa de remate) ella tuvo que regatear ( *debatir el precio*) para comprar la remera azul de Sydney. (she had to bid in order to buy the blue t-shirt from Sydney *depende del gobierno* (depends on the government

*la caña de azúcar* Los inmigrantes en Queensland trabajaron por años en los campos de la caña de azúcar. (the immigrants in Queensland worked for years in the sugar cane fields)

*las ratas* Cuando los inmigrantes cortaba la caña, ratas y serpientes les atacaron. (when the immigrants were cutting the cane, rats and snakes attacked them)

*contrajeron* Ellos contrajeron varias enfermedades en los campos de caña. (they contracted various diseases in the cane fields)

*una tonelada* Fueron pagado por la tonelada (they were paid by the ton)

*grados de centígrados* (degrees Centigrade)

*los tranvías de Melbourne* un sistema de tranvías (a system of trams de Melbourne)

*la hora pico* (peak time, rush hour)

*me enteré de ello por mis lecturas* (I learned of it through reading)

*me enteré que él estaba alegre* (I found out that he was happy)

*alguna palabra* ( some word)

*tiempo* (time, tense)

*demasiada información* (too much information)

*estoy asombrado porque era un día asombrante* (I am amazed because it was an amazing day)

*la diferencia* (the difference)

*Me temo que esto oxidado con mi portugués* (I am afraid that I am rusty with my Portuguese)

*aguantar no puedo aguantar la personalidad del jefe* (I can't tolerate the boss's personality)

*averiguar querria averiguar la fuente del rumour* (I would seek out the source of the rumor)

*Cuando llegue al grupo, no hablaba ninguna palabra de español* (when I arrived at the group, I wasn't speaking one word of Spanish)

### **Notas de Carmen: 8.15.01**

*alemán/Alemania* (German, Germany)

*hacer de testigo para la licencia de matrimonio* (serve as a witness for marriage license)

*el tesorero está a cargo del tesoro* (the treasurer is in charge of the treasury)

*Mauricio estaba allí* (Mauricio was there)

*ningún otro compañero* (no other compa)

*él me contó la historia* (he told me the story)

*ella se quejó de sus responsabilidades* (she complained of her responsibilities)

*ella estaba enferma y su hermana estaba embarazada* (she was sick and her sister pregnant)

*tomó la decisión de comenazar otra carrera* (made the decision to start another career)

**Notas de Cecilia de 8.31.01 y Repaso (Notes and Review Notes)**

*los estándares de la universidad* (the standards of . . .) *el nivel de la universidad* (the level)

*la capacidad* (the capacity)

*el fracaso prevenir el fracaso de los alumnos* (foresee the weakness of the students)

*el banquero de W-F* (Wells Fargo banker)

*la electricista* (the electrician)

*el camarero sobrevive por sus propinas* (the waiter survives through his tips)

*el muro encierra la iglesia católica* (the wall encloses the catholic church)

*el sacerdote se acercó a mí en el estacionamiento* (the priest approached me in the parking lot)

*el costo de una recaída no puede ser recuperado* (the cost of a relapse cannot be recovered)

*él gozó de 8 meses de sobriedad y luego se recayó* (he enjoyed 8 months of sobriety and then relapsed.)

*Corpus Christi está ubicada a menos de 2 horas de la frontera* (CC is located less than 3 hours from the border).

**Cecilia continued:**

*Pueden usar el dinero para lo que quieren con tal que esté para doble A* (they can use the money for what they want provided that it is for AA)

Alcohol, *alcohólico* (alcohol, alcoholic)

*agüantar no pude agüantar los problemas causados por el alcohol, por lo tanto, lo quité de mi vida.* (I couldn't tolerate the problems caused by alcohol, therefore, I removed it from my life).

*un cuarto del hotel* (a room of the hotel)

*el cuarto día del mes la cuarta vez* (the fourth day of the month)

*tres cuatro cinco* (three, four, five)

*los ojos me pican a causa de la alergia* (my eyes burn because of joy)

*el bosque y la selva* (the forest and the jungle)

*a propósito lo hicieron a propósito* (they do it on purpose)

*con permiso* (excuse me)

*es predecible la reacción*

*él es una persona a la que le falta responsabilidad y no cumple sus promesas.*

*mucama* (servant)

*me había olvidado que la hija mayor vive aquí* (I had forgotten that the older daughter lives here)

*ella estaba embarazada* (she was pregnant)

*ella es una persona a la que le falta estabilidad emocional* (she is a person who lacks emotional stability).

*escaso comida fue escaso durante la guerra* (scarce, food was scarce during the war)

*arroyo el arroyo desbordó en el 75 en KC en la Plaza* (the stream overflowed in 1975 in Kansas City in The Plaza).

*Credibilidad* (credability)

*amigos leales* loyal friends)

*inestabilidad una falta de estabilidad* (unstable)

*lágrima de cocodrilo*

*los campos de caña de azúcar*

*durante la inundación de KC el agua del arroyo desbordó*

*el tesorero está a cargo del tesoro* (the treasurer is in charge of the treasury)

*Mauricio estaba allí* (Mauricio was there)

*ningún otro compañero* (no other compa)

### **9/01/01: Cecilia**

*era maniaco depresiva* (she was manic depressive)

*desde mi punto de vista* (from my point of view)

*la madurez* (maturity)

*el depósito . él depositó su plata y entonces de repente la sacó del banco.* .(he deposited his money and then suddenly withdrew it from the bank)

*juzgando de los reportajes* (judging from the reports)

*los prejuiciosos* (the prejudices)

*estar celoso/a de* (to be jealous of)

*tener celes* (to be jealous)

*explotar = aprovecharse de* (exploit, take advantage of)

*para que terminar con los terroristas, se debe destruirlos.* .(in order to finish with the terrorists, they out to destroy them)

*la bomba en la forma de un avion* (the bomb in the form of a plane)

*no dudo que ella sepa.* .(I don't doubt that she knows)

*una técnica* (a technique)

*sacudir sacudiéndolo ..(shake) ella sacudía a su hijo.* (.she was shaking her son)

*mostró algo de cariño hacia el hijo.* .(showed some affection toward her son)



*una meta frívola* (a frivolous goal)

*vive en una forma frívola* (live in a frivolous manner)

*una pelota* (the ball)

*tejer* (weave)

### **Cecilia .9.01.01 continued**

*lana* (wool, “cash”)

*orejas* (sheep)

*vacas* (cows)

*el rancho* (ranch)

*vegetales* (vegetables)

*la carne* (meat)

### **9/13/01: Carmen**

*se ha estabilizado en su negocios* (he has established himself in his business)

*aprobar los cursos. . él aprobó todos los cursos que había tomado el primer semestre.* (he passed all the courses that he had taken the first semester).

*relacionarse No me relaciono con otros bebedores.* (I don’t associate with other drinkers)

*él me insistió en que él no había tomado ni alcohol tampoco drogas.* (he insisted to me that he had not taken either alcohol or drugs)

*agregar El Sr Powell lo confirmó y agregó: "Vamos a utilizar todos los recursos disponibles. .(Mr. Powell confirmed and added: “We are going to use all resources available.”)*

*la rabia = la ira (rage), el enojo* (the rage, anger)

**9/21/01: Rocio**

*las oraciones de los políticos (discursos)* (the sentences of the politicians-speeches)

*se mudó a EEUU (se trasladó: trasladarse).* (he moved to the U.S.)

*vivió no vivó* (he lived: distinguish from Portuguese *viver*)

*eventualmente con el paso del tiempo o más tarde o posteriormente* (eventually)

*un fundamento de la lengua . . . una base de la lengua* (a fundamental of the language)

*tomé la decisión de abandonar el portugués* (I made a decision to give up Portuguese)

*trato de concentrarme en hablar* (I try to concentrate on speaking)

*el asunto tiene que concordar con el verbo* (the subject and verb have to agree)

*las palabras africanas* (the African words)

**2/17/02: Rocio**

*me gusta estudiar los dos (asuntos).* (I like to study those two subjects)

*se usa temas o aspectos en vez de asuntos.* (you use themes or aspects instead of subjects) . .

*desarrollar el tema.* .(develop the theme)

*enamorarse de - con personas o algo poetico, encantar con temas materiales p.ej. a mí me*

*encanta estudiar linguísticas* (I like to study linguistics)

*se casó (años atrás). . hace años* (he married years ago)

*a las 2 de la tarde* (hora específica/specific time), *pero ayer por la tarde* (no específica/non-specific time)

*cien por ciento y después de 100%*

*vi la obra, Agua Salada, en Lisboa* (I saw the play, "Salt Water", in Lisbon).

*entrevistarse con* (to have an interview with . . .)

*el destructor llevó contrabando* (the destroyer carried contrband goods)

*el gobierno había amenazado la vida del escritor* (the governor had threatened the life of the writer)

*ella, una mujer culta, huyó de Cuba en los años 50.* (she, an educated women, fled Cuba in the 50's)

### **Cecilia: 3-11-02: Repaso (Review)**

*ellos están indecisos* (they are indecisive)

*no está en un buen momento* (it is not a good time)

*yo he advertido en mis lecturas* (I have noticed in my readings)

*subjuntivo* (subjunctive)

*él quería recoger su maleta, la cual estaba en mi casa* (he wanted to pick up his bag, which was in my house)

*nuestros ojos nunca se encontraron* (our eyes never met)

*a él le falta la habilidad de mantenerse firme ante la tensión del club* (he lacks the ability to stay firm in the face of tension from the club)

*no tiene la fuerza de carácter* (he doesn't have the strength of character)

*quiere firmar esto* (I want to write this)

*bloquearla* ( to block it)

*los honorarios* (the fees)

*\*Austin vino a mi casa para hablar con Geneva, con (quien. la que, la cual) estoy casado.*

(Austin came to my house to speak with Geneva, with whom I am married)

\**Vimos el filme, Perros amores, en el teatro de GC.* (We saw the film, Perros amores, in the theatre of GC.

**7/9/02: Clemen**

*otros 10 participantes, no 10 otros*

*los misioneros* (vocabulary)

*los pioneros* (vocabulary)

*evalua* (pro: vowels)

*niveles* (pro)

*huyeron* (pro)

*desarrollado* (pro)

*la categoría* (pro)

*decifrar* (pro\_

*detalles* (pro)

**1-24-03: Joel**

*emocionalmente* (pro: vowels)

*metas* (pro)

*regresar* (pro: ray not re)

*yo era soltero, no yo estaba soltero*

*año* (pro: distinguish from Portuguese)

*consulado* (pro: emphasize vowel sounds)

*guerra* (pro)

*detalles* (pro)

*analfabeto* (illiterate)

*amenáza* (pro: threat)

*vivimos baja la influencia de la guerra* (we live under the influence of the war)

### **5.29.03: Clemen**

*celebración* (pro: vowels)

*el regreso* (pro: vowels)

*regresar* (pro: vowels)

*egoista* (pro: vowels)

*bebé* (pro)

*falleció* (pro)

*las vacaciones*, no la vacación

*efectivo* (cash)

*en efectivo* (in cash)

### **7/8/03: Joel**

*fuego artificiales* (fire works)

*latas de cerveza* (beer can)

*cuchillo* (pro)

*vientre* (pro: vowels)

*espejar – reflejar* (reflects)

*voy a practicar escuchando* ok. *Voy a practicar a escuchar* ok

*falleció* (pro)

*braile* (pro)

*apellido* (pro)

### **8/19/03: Clemen**

*la agricultura* (pronunciation: vowels)

*un curso* (pro: vowels)

*él me escribió una nota, no él escribió a mí* (he wrote me a note: indirect object before verb)

*periódico* (pro)

*peligro* (pro: vowels)

*causado* (pro)

*una película* Ipro)

*chaqueta amarilla* (pro)

### **10/25/03: Notas de Clemen (corrections: interlanguage)**

*“Escoba nueva barre muy bien”* (proverb: new broom sweeps very well)

*adaptación* (pronunciation)

*adaptación-adoptada* (pronunciation)

*familia adoptiva no familia adoptada* (adopted family)

*conoce* (pronunciation)

*estamos leyendo* (pronunciation)

*admitir* (pronunciation: emphasize vowels)